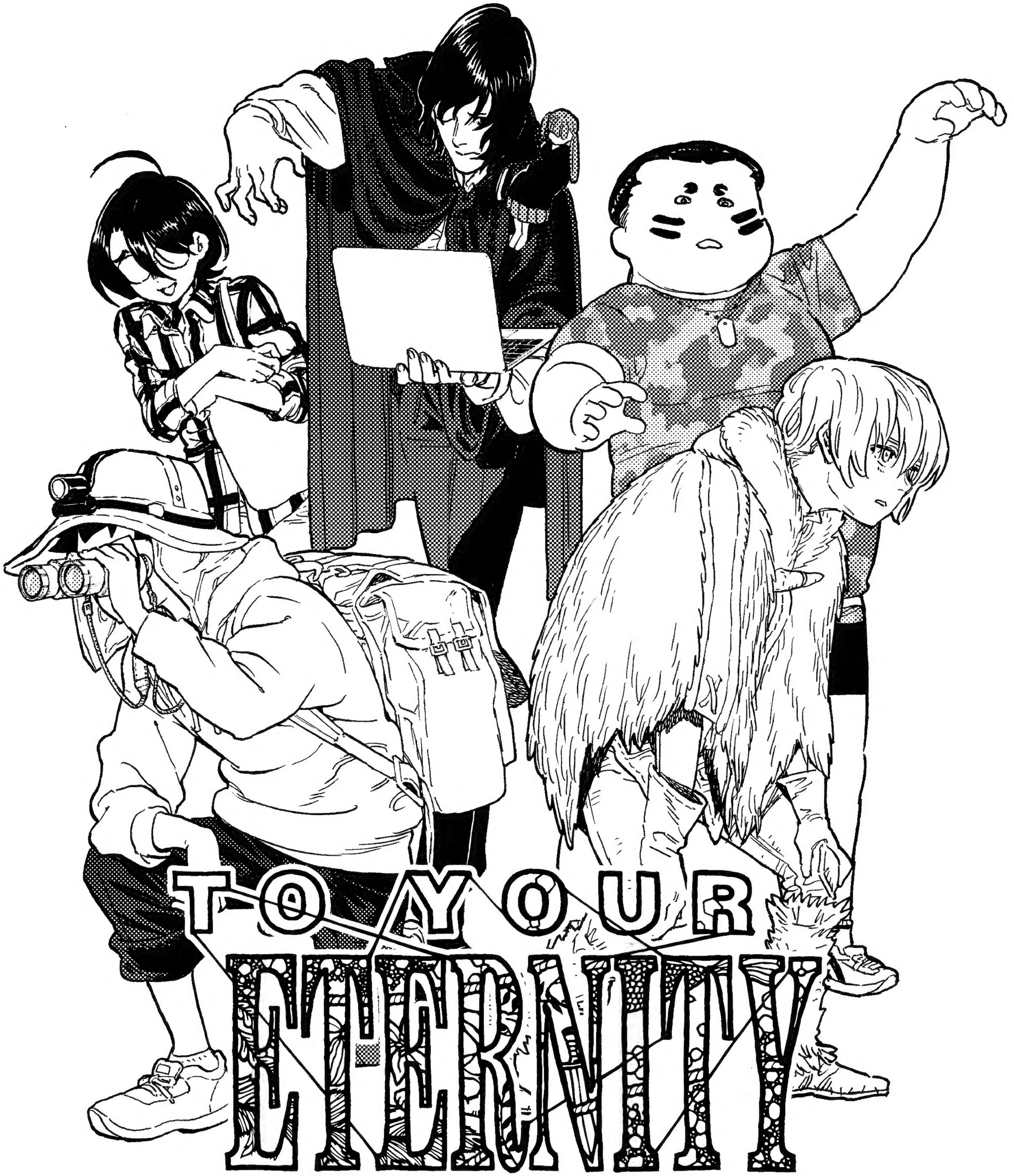
From the creator of The New York Times manga bestseller *A Silent Voice*

TO YOUR ETERNITY

17

YOSHITOKI OIMA



17

YOSHITOKI OIMA

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IT'S BEEN ABOUT SIX MONTHS SINCE I CAME HERE.

#147 Return to the Present

BUT THE NOKKERS WERE MERELY LURKING IN THE SHADOWS, PERFORMING A WORLD AT PEACE.

I THOUGHT THE PEACEFUL WORLD I HAD WORKED TOWARD FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS WAS FINALLY HERE.

BOTH TYPES WERE EXCEEDINGLY RARE, SINCE MOST PEOPLE WENT THEIR ENTIRE LIVES UNAWARE OF THE NOKKERS.

WHILE OTHERS CHOSE TO GO BACK TO THEIR OLD LIVES, DESPITE IT BEING A STRUGGLE.

SOME PEOPLE EMBRACED THE NOKKERS.

IT SOUNDS LIKE THE NOKKERS ARE HERE **BECAUSE** THE WORLD ISN'T PEACEFUL.

IN THIS NEW WORLD, THESE NOKKERS, WHO NO LONGER KILL INDISCRIMINATELY, CLAIM, "WE LIVE INSIDE THOSE RUSHING TOWARD DEATH." THAT WORRIES ME.

WHY WOULD SOMEONE WANT TO DIE?

SO MUCH SO THAT NO-BODY SHOULD HAVE TIME TO WORRY.

AND THERE'S LOTS OF FUN STUFF TO DO.

PEOPLE LIVE IN STURDY HOMES.

THERE'S PLENTY OF GOOD FOOD.

THERE'S NO ONE STARVING IN TOWN.

THEY MUST BE A LOT HAPPIER NOW THAN IN THE WAR-TORN PAST...

I'M SURE EVERYONE AT HOME WOULD GET ME.

TO BE HONEST... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY ANYONE WOULD WANT TO DIE IN THIS WORLD.

I'M HOME, EVERY-BODY!

WELCOME BACK, FU-CHAN!

HUSH

EVERY-BODY, I'M HOME~

IT'S AWFULLY QUIET...

...

KAI'S WORKSHOP IS FINISHED!

GOOD FOR YOU, KAI!

AND THERE'S GUGU'S WORKOUT STUFF!!

?!

"!!"
CRUMBLE

U-

URGH
...

A-

ARE YOU OKAY ?!

HNNN

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

MARCH?! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?!

NOMOR?! WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?!

NO-MOR ...?

...N...

TROMP TROMP TROMP TROMP

GUGU!! BONNN!!

WHAT DOES "NOMOR" MEAN?!

SHUT UP! WHY ARE YOU SCREAMING THE SECOND YOU GET HOME?

I'M STUDYING, SO IF YOU'RE DONE, BE QUIET.

WRITE ?!

OH... SO SHE WAS TRYING TO WRITE "NO MORE"?

NO... MORE...

URGH ...

THEY WERE JUST LEARNING HOW TO HOLD CHOPSTICKS AND WRITE FROM THEIR TUTOR.

CALM DOWN.

TONARI!! WHAT HAPPENED?! SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH MARCH AND IDDY!! WHO'S THAT LADY DOWNSTAIRS?! WHAT'S "NOMOR" MEAN?!

HUH?

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU, TONARI...?

YOU'VE GOT THEM, TOO, FUSHI.

FINALS?!

I'VE GOT FINALS NEXT WEEK.

S-STUDYING?

OH, THEY'RE BACK.

THIS HOOLIGAN WAS MAKING BLADES WITHOUT PERMISSION.

KEEP AN EYE ON HIM FROM NOW ON.

WH-WHAT HAPPENED, KAI?!

OH, LONG TIME NO SEE, FUSHI-SAN.

HUH?!

ANOTHER ONE?!

YES, OFFICER...

AND WE'D BETTER NOT CATCH YOU DOING THIS AGAIN.

WE'RE SORRY...

YES, OFFI-CER...

DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU DOING THAT AGAIN, BOYS.

HAIRO! GUGU!

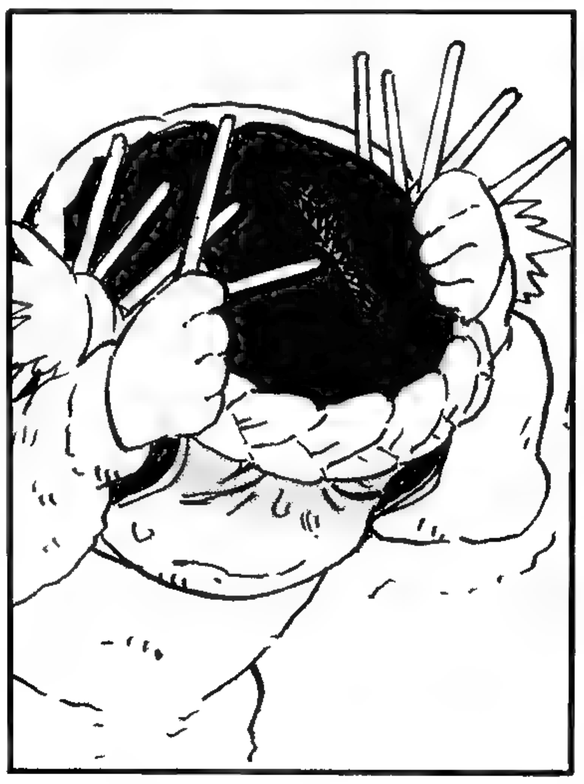
EVERY-ONE...

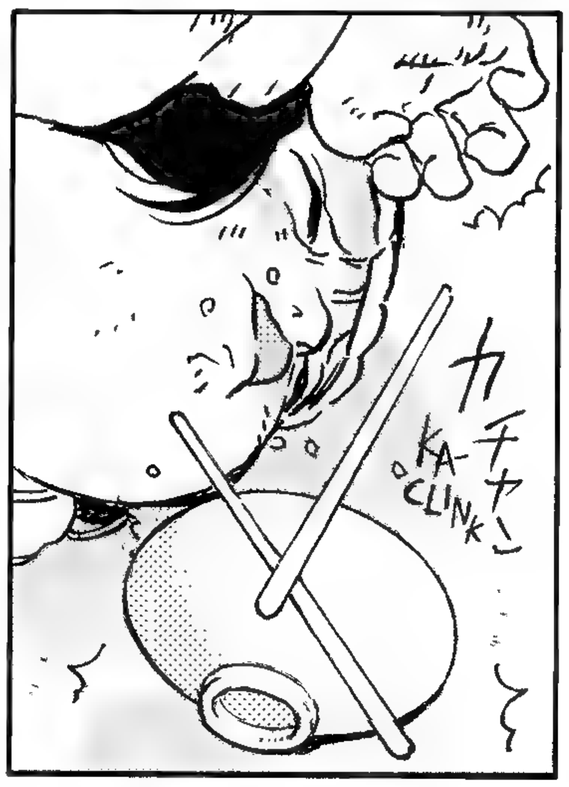
WHAT HAPPENED WHILE I WAS GONE...?

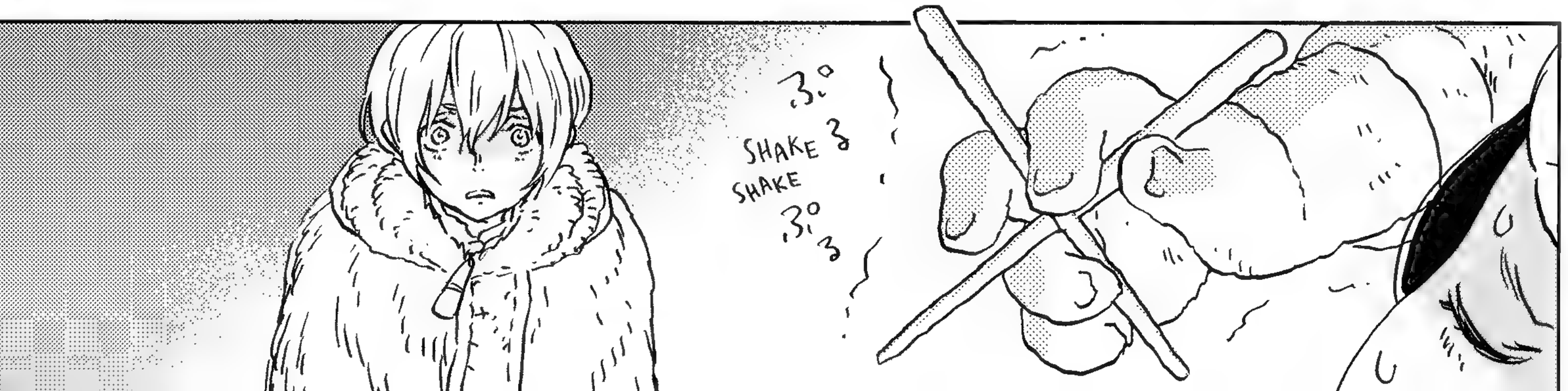









カチャ
KA-
CLINK


3.
SHAKE
SHAKE
3.

CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CLACK
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
SNAG

CHOMP CHOMP
カリッチャ
カリッチ
...
CHOMP CHOMP
カリッチャ
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CHOMP CHOMP
カリッチャ
カリッチャ
CHOMP CHOMP
カリッチャ
カリッチャ
OW!
THAT HURTS!
...
CHOMP CHOMP
カリッチャ
カリッチャ
I GOT THAT PLASTIC SURGERY STUFF!
THIS SCAR?!
YOU, UM...
HEY, GUGU...
CRUNCH
HIM, TOO!
...WHAT ABOUT HAIRO?
THAT'S WHY MY CLOTHES ARE ALL RIPPED!!
OH, I JUST FELL DOWN SOME STAIRS!!
YOUR MASK WAS BUSTED ...
...

DID THEY BREAK WHEN YOU FELL EARLIER?

OH, MAYBE HE BIT DOWN ON HIS FALSE TEETH?

IF I HADN'T STEPPED OUT FOR AN ERRAND, EVERYTHING WOULD'VE BEEN FINE. SORRY.

THERE, THERE, FUSHI. FOLKS JUST HAPPENED TO BE A LITTLE OFF TODAY.

WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED ?!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, HAIRO?

UGH... BLOOD ...

DO YOU HAVE A CUT IN YOUR MOUTH?

BLARGH! GROSS!!

SPLORCH

!!!!!!

OH, THAT NOISY BRAT'S BACK.

HE HAD TO GO OVER-SEAS ON BUSINESS.

OH YEAH, WHERE'S BON?

BUT EVERY-ONE...

...

HUH? NOTHING. WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

MESSAR!

WHAT HAPPENED TO EVERY-BODY?!

THEY DON'T LOOK HAPPY...

yeah! yeah!

WHAT? DOES IT LOOK LIKE EVERYONE CHANGED WHILE YOU WERE GONE?

AND THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ALL SO DOWN...?

BETTER THAN BEIN' DEAD, AIN'T IT?

WE WERE ALL DRAGGED INTO THIS NEW WORLD WITH NO WARNING.

NOW WE'RE TRYIN' TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO LIVE HERE.

THAT'S ALL.

WELL, A NEW ENVIRON-MENT ISN'T ENOUGH TO SHAKE ME.

YEAH, YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED, MESSAR.

BECAUSE I'M WIDE AWAKE.

...AT YOUR FRIENDS, TOO.

YOU TAKE A GOOD LOOK...

HMM? OH, THANKS.

HERE... I MADE YOU A NEW ONE...

GUGU...

YEOW! THIS THING'S CHAFING MY SCAR.

OH! SORRY! THERE MUST BE SOME-THING ELSE WE CAN—

OH, I KNOW!

...

SORRY IF I'M WRONG, BUT...

...I DON'T THINK THAT SCAR'S REALLY FROM FALLING DOWN...

WHAT ABOUT THIS ONE?!

IT'S REALLY FLUFFY!!

YEAH.

HUH? REAN MADE IT?

HUH? THAT'S THE CRAYFISH MASK REAN MADE FOR YOU. DOESN'T THAT TAKE YOU BACK?

OH, WHERE'D THIS WEIRD THING COME FROM?

OH...RIGHT. SHE DIDN'T GET TO GIVE IT TO YOU.

YEAH.

REAN REALLY MADE THIS?!

FOR ME?!

CRAP, I CALLED IT WEIRD!!

YEP...

HUH...

REAN MADE THIS FOR ME...

HOW'S IT LOOK?!

GOOD. NICE.

I WISH I COULD GO BACK TO TAKUNAHA...

ARE YOU SERIOUS, GUGU...?

AH...

HUH...?

WHY...

GUGU?

W-

WUH-

YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO TAKUNAHA...?

YOU FIRST BROUGHT ME BACK IN TAKUNAHA, RIGHT?

THE BOOZE MAN'S SHOP WAS STILL THERE.

Y-Y... YOU...

...DON'T LIKE...

YANOME?

THAT'S NOT IT.

AND, MAN, IT REALLY TOOK ME BACK.

#148 Where One Belongs

WELL.

IT WAS JUST A JOKE ANYWAY.

G'NIGHT.

...

...

SO TO EVERY-ONE ELSE, THIS ISN'T A GOOD PLACE...!?

URGH ...

LOOK AT THIS, FUSHI!!

HUH?!

WE SHOULD CLEAN UP THOSE TROUBLESOME ROOTS FROM RENRIL NOW THAT THEY'VE FINALLY STOPPED GROWING!

ISN'T THIS THE PERFECT TIME?

WHAT IS IT?

THE INTER-NATIONAL UPROOTER ALLIANCE WANTS TO PULL OUT ALL THOSE ROOTS YOU PLANTED!!

ハンタ―ト!! THE ROOTS STAY!!

BUT THE AREA IS FULL OF LOCALS PROTESTING THIS PLAN!

OH, IT'S BON-SAN!

THE GREAT TREE IS STILL ALIVE.

ニョキニョキ SPROUT SPROUT

ARGH!!

ギュ

GLOOM

I'M NOT HARMFUL!! AND I'M *NOT* DONE YET!!

THERE GO THOSE FUSHI FUNDAMENTAL-ISTS. THEY'RE JUST AS HARMFUL AS THE ROOTS!

SO THAT NONSENSE ABOUT THEIR GROWTH STOPPING WAS JUST LIES FROM THE CHURCH OF BENNETT!

ピク
PLAK

OH!

WELCOME~

CLANK KA-CLANK

BY THE WAY, DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH FALSE TEETH?

YES, I STILL HAVE MY OLD ONES.

I'M HERE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU AND GUGU.

WE *TOLD* YOU THAT WE FELL.

I'M AT WORK, YOU KNOW.

CLATTER

YOU SURE YOU DON'T WANT THE LATEST MODEL?

I GUESS IT'S HARD TO BLAME 'EM WHEN I LOOK LIKE THIS, HUH?

...HASN'T FIT IN AT SCHOOL FROM THE START.

GUGU APPAR-ENTLY...

WHAT'S WITH THE MASK?

I WAS INJURED...

HOW?

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, EVERYONE WAS INTERESTED IN HIM.

IF ONLY WE HAD BEEN IN THE SAME GRADE...

YOU THINK THEY'LL BE SATISFIED IF I SHOW THEM?

GUGU AGONIZED OVER IT.

COME ON! JUST SHOW ME!

THEY PESTERED HIM EVERY DAY WITH THEIR CURIOSITY.

WE WEREN'T TEASING HIM, SENSEI! WE JUST WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT HIS MASK!

HEY, LEAVE THE NEW KID ALONE!

OH, WELL...

YOU'RE KINDA AVERAGE ...?

...

...THERE'S A NEW HOTSHOT AROUND HERE. THAT YOU?

HEY, I HEARD...

BUT RUMORS SPREAD...

...AND EVEN NASTIER TYPES ARRIVED.

CLONK!

WHAT'D YOU SAY?!

"ACCHAN" WHO?

FLOP

OW!!

THIS GUY'S TROUBLE, ACCHAN!!

AH ...!

WHAT IS IT?

ACCHAN RUNS THIS AREA.

YOU GOT SOME NERVE ACTIN' ALL BIG WITHOUT INTRODUCIN' YOURSELF!!

OH, SO YOU'RE A TOUGH GUY, HUNH?

CRACK

CRICK CRACK

COME ON, I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.

AH!

YOU PLANNIN' TO BE THE CITY MASCOT OR SOMETHIN'?!

WHOKK

HEY! CUT THAT OUT.

AH! YOU CRACKED IT!!

WHOA!

CLUNK

YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT!!

WHOOMP

APOLO-GIZE!!

KII
CLENCH

WHAT IS YOUR *PROB-LEM?*

HI-YAAAAAH!

KIIIII
CRACK

GO EASY ON HIM OR YOU'LL JUST MAKE TROUBLE FOR KAZUMITSU!

LET IT GO, GUGU!

おおお
AARGH

CC

KA
WHACK

I GUESS I'LL GET MIXED UP IN THIS, TOO.

OH WELL.

SORRY, HAIRO.

AND THAT JUST KEPT HAPPENING.

UNTIL ONE DAY, WE WERE BEING LED AWAY BY GUYS IN BLUE.

GUGU SAID HE WANTED TO GO BACK TO TAKU-NAHA...

SURE, IT'S A NICE PLACE.

BUT...

I HAD NO IDEA...

AND THAT BRINGS YOU UP TO SPEED.

I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS FOR A PLACE TO BE "HARD" TO LIVE IN.

BUT I'M ALSO GOING TO LEAVE THAT HOUSE. WITHIN THE YEAR.

IS IT... HARD FOR *YOU* HERE, TOO, HAIRO?

...

THERE'S A PLACE FOR YOU TO SLEEP, AND THE FOOD IS GOOD!

WH-WHY?!

I DON'T GET IT.

THAT HOUSE ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH?

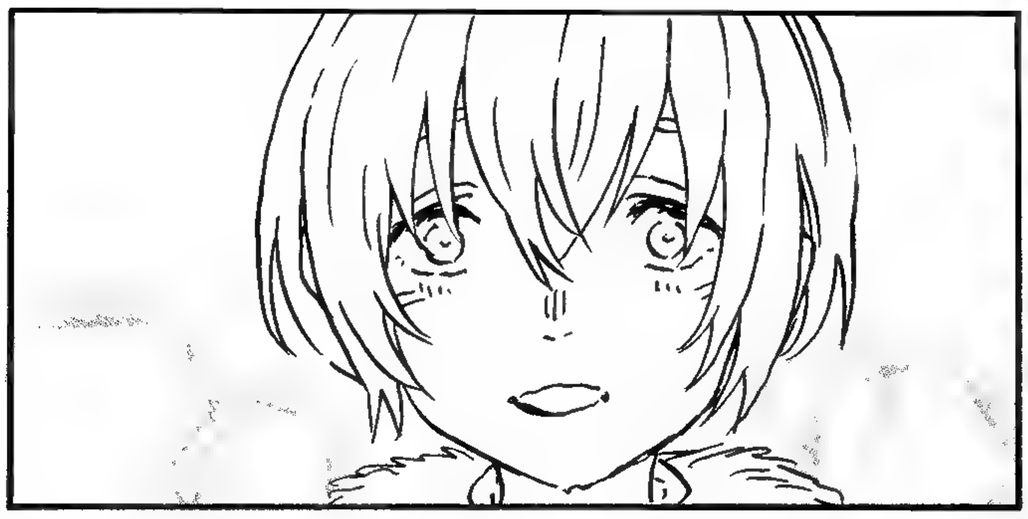
BECAUSE I CAN'T ACT LIKE A CHILD FOREVER.

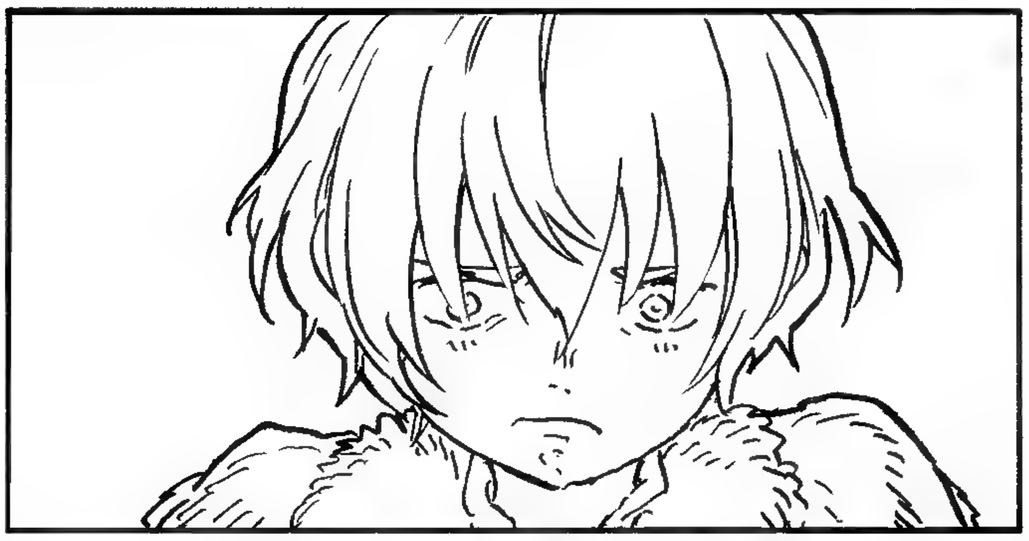
IF YOU COUNT ALL THE YEARS I'VE BEEN ALIVE, I'M OLDER THAN KAZUMITSU.

SETTLE DOWN, PLEASE.

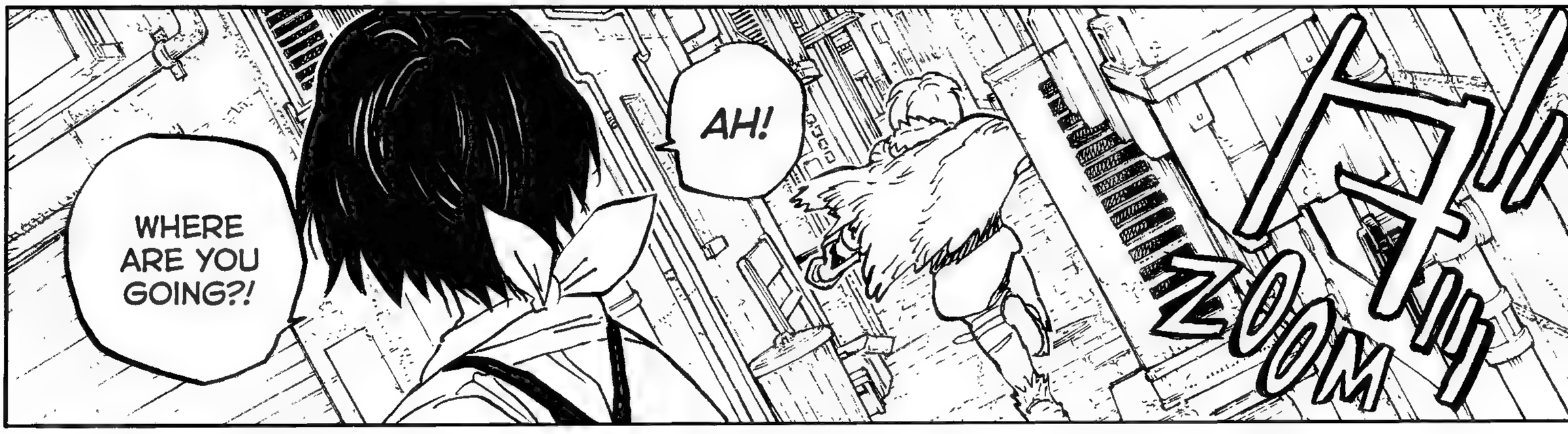
I'M NOT LEAVING BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE IT.

WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE? SCHOOL? *ME?!*






I SIMPLY WANT TO SEE ALL SORTS OF PLACES IN THIS FUN, NEW WORLD YOU BROUGHT ME TO.


WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
AH!
ZOOM


I'M NOT FINISHED YET.

WHURRR

WHURRR

WHURRR

WHURRR

WHURRR

WHURRR

WHURRR

YOU DON'T *ACTUALLY* THINK FUSHI'S GONNA SEND YOU OFF WITH A SMILE, DO YOU? WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE?

YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT WANTIN' TO GO BACK TO TAKUNAHA, RIGHT?

BROTHER ...

...EH?

A BIG BROTHER'S GOTTA KNOW HIS LITTLE BROTHER, TOO.

NO WAY! THAT'S NOT WHAT A *COOL* BIG BROTHER WOULD DO.

JUST LET HIM IN. SPILL ALL YOUR WORRIES TO HIM.

YA THINK? WELL, *I'D* PREFER THAT KINDA BROTHER.

I KNOW, I KNOW.

I NEVER WANTED HIM TO SEE ME ALL BEAT UP LIKE THAT.

SHEESH... WHY'D HE HAVE TO COME HOME SO SUDDENLY?

IT'S JUST US AND THE ANIMALS HERE RIGHT NOW.

I THOUGHT HE'D GONE HOME TO SEE YOU, GUGU...

AFTER I TOLD HIM ABOUT OUR FIGHT... HE RAN OFF SOMEWHERE LIKE HE HAD SOME BREAK-THROUGH.

I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...

HMM? FUSHI-SAN ISN'T BACK?

HE AIN'T HERE.

WHO CAN FIND FUSHI FOR ME?!

カサ RUSTLE

/10 カくLOP

ノ FLAPPH

WE'RE GONNA GO FIND FUSHI, GUYS!!

ALL RIGHT, YOU!!

BE CARE-FUL!

THESE THINGS UNDER-STAND WHAT WE SAY?

LOOKS LIKE HE TOOK THIS STREET...

A HORSE!!

SNIFF

SNIFF

HOLD HIM DOWN!!

TAKE THIS~

ヒヒヒ!!!

CLOP

ARGH

ARGH

IT'S THAT BOY WITH THE MASK AGAIN, ISN'T IT? WHAT A TROUBLE-MAKER!

GOSH, ANOTHER FIGHT.

!

十川 GRAPL 十千

HUH?! QUIT YER JABBER-IN'!

SHRIP

GUGU ?!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

WHUMP

H-HEY!!

FUSHI ?!

LET'S GET OUTTA HERE! FOLLOW ME!

GET BACK HERE, PUNK!!

OUTTA MY WAY!!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! STOP THAT!!

THAT'S YOU, ISN'T IT?!

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING, WEARING MY MASK LIKE THAT...?
YEAH... SORRY...
OH, I KNOW THAT FACE.
NAND!
YEAH.
RIGHT?! WHY HIM, THOUGH?
BECAUSE HE'S THE CLOSEST TO YOU IN BUILD...
I WANTED TO KNOW WHAT YOUR LIFE IS LIKE...
AND WHEN I WAS WALKING THROUGH TOWN...THOSE GUYS PICKED A FIGHT WITH ME...
...I HATE PEOPLE THAT HURT YOU, SO I GOT ANGRY...
I NEVER NOTICED.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO PUT YOU THROUGH THIS.
SORRY, GUGU.
OH...
YOU WERE PLOWING THE FIELD FOR A POTATO LIKE ME.
PO-TATO?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

HE LOOKED JUST LIKE MY BROTHER.

I THOUGHT THAT WAS KIND OF WEIRD...

THEN A YOUNG CLERK SPOKE TO ME.

HELLO.

THE BOOZE MAN'S SHOP...

...HAS BARELY CHANGED SINCE WE WERE THERE.

...

YEAH...

SHWIP

...

TAKUNAHA IS A BETTER PLACE THAN THIS.

AND I REALIZED MY BROTHER PROTECTED THE PLACE.

THAT MASK...

OH, THIS? WEIRD, ISN'T IT? I JUST BOUGHT IT.

NO, IT'S REALLY GREAT! BUT I GUESS IT *IS* FESTIVAL TIME.

RATTLE

PLEASE COME IN.

OH, THAT'S REAN CROPP.

SHE'S THE LADY WHO USED TO RUN THIS PLACE.

SHE NEVER MARRIED. SHE JUST KEPT WAITING FOR HER BOYFRIEND TO COME BACK.

HERE, THIS IS THE SHOP AS IT LOOKED THEN.

IT HASN'T CHANGED MUCH, HAS IT?

TAKE A LOOK.

RIGHT HERE.

ANCES-TOR?

...

MY ANCESTOR HAD IT PAINTED MANY, MANY YEARS AGO.

AND THIS IS REAN CROPP AGAIN.

THE MAN IN THE CENTER WAS THE FIRST OWNER OF THE SHOP.

THIS PERSON WAS MY ANCESTOR.

AND HERE'S YOU.

GUGU.

WELCOME BACK...

?

...

GOSH, THAT MASK IS SO WELL MADE.

YOU'LL BE A BIG HIT AT THE FESTIVAL TOMORROW!!

THE MASK... AND YOUR PHYSIQUE, TOO... YOU LOOK JUST LIKE HIM!!

...

I KID, I KID!!

HEY, YOU READY TO START DECORATIN' ?!

YES!! FEEL FREE TO COME BACK TOMORROW!

I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO THAT!!

OH, YEAH!! THAT'S RIGHT!! THE FESTIVAL!!

OKAY!!

EEK!

EEK!

IT'S A FESTIVAL TO HONOR THE MONSTER GUGU WHO DEFENDED THE PEOPLE OF THIS LAND FROM EVIL CREATURES.

SINCE THIS IS THE LEGENDARY LAND WHERE HE WAS BORN, WE HOLD THIS FESTIVAL TO REMEMBER HIM EVERY YEAR.

ARE YOU A TOURIST?

YOU'RE WEARING THAT OUTFIT AND YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW?!

HEY, UH, WHAT KIND OF FESTIVAL IS THIS AGAIN?

YEAH... SOME-THING LIKE U THAT.

GUGU!!

AH!! IT'S GUGU!!

I KNEW THIS WAS A GIFT LEFT FOR ME BY MY BROTHER, REAN, AND THE BOOZE MAN.

NO ONE HURT ME.

THEY ALL *WELCOMED* ME.

I COULD SEE MY FUTURE THERE.

MY LIFE, TOO...

MY BROTHER, MY FAMILY, MY HOME...

THEY KEPT GOING.

MY MEMORIES OF TAKUNAHA WEREN'T OVER.

...OR MAKING HIM SAD.

...I DON'T PLAN ON LEAVING MY LITTLE BROTHER BEHIND...

BUT...

NO MATTER HOW MANY JERKS THERE ARE HERE, I WON'T GO TO TAKUNAHA.

RELAX.

SORRY I'M A WEAK BIG BROTHER, GETTIN' TEMPTED BY TAKUNAHA!!

WHACK

WHACK

DID I SAY SOME-THING WEIRD?!

WHAT'S THAT FACE SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

NO.

I WAS JUST THINKING THAT I'VE GOT A LOT MORE WORK TO DO...

WHAT A WEIRD DOG.

HUFF HUFF HUFF HUFF

OH!

LOOK, FUSHI.

HA HA...

HAHAHA...! HAHA!

HA HA HA HA HA!

HA!!!

HA!!!

HA!!!

THEN I'LL HAVE TO WORK HARDER, TOO!!

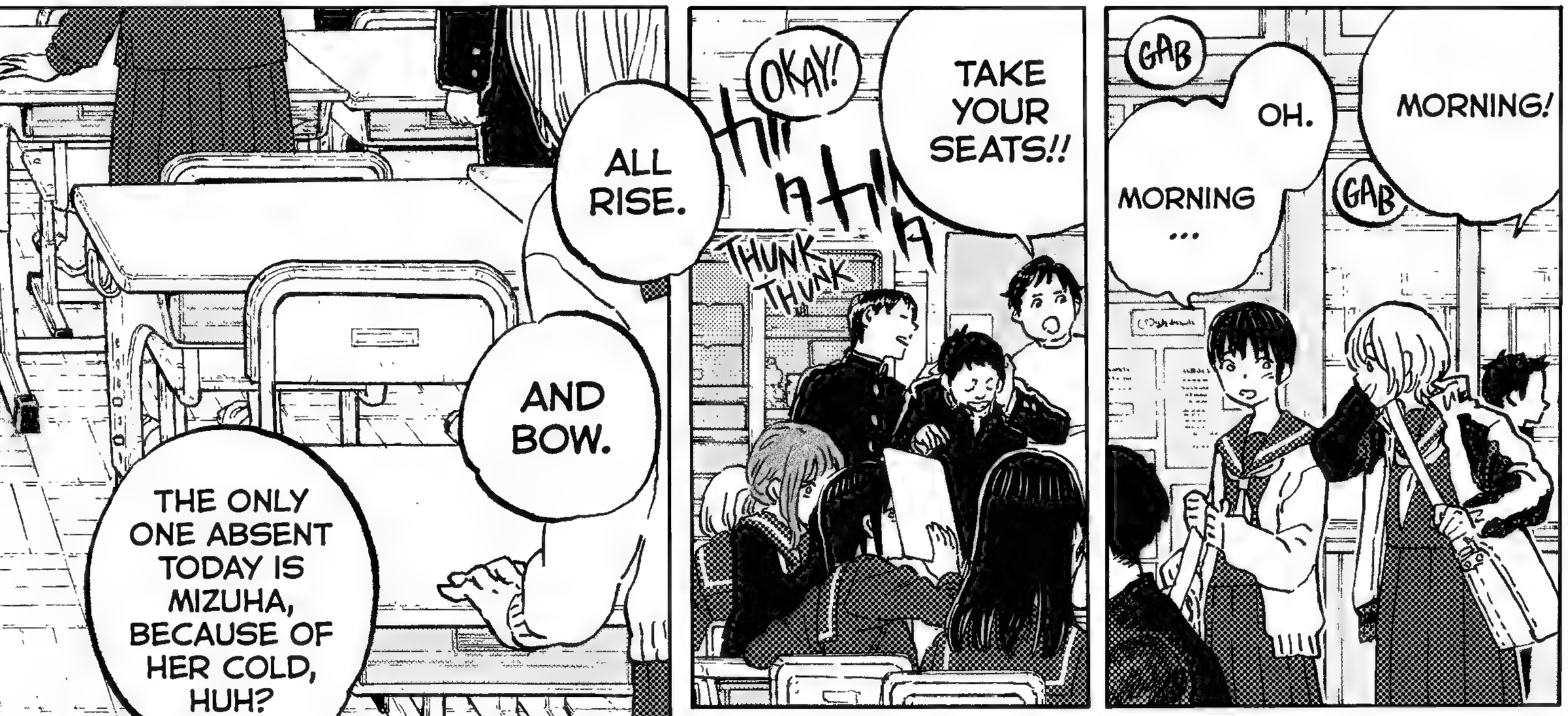
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I'M TIRED...
GAB
HEY.
GAB
MORNIN'.
GAB


ALL RISE.
AND BOW.
THE ONLY ONE ABSENT TODAY IS MIZUHA, BECAUSE OF HER COLD, HUH?
OKAY!
THUNK THUNK
TAKE YOUR SEATS!!
GAB
OH.
MORNING ...
GAB
MORNING!

SEE ME AFTER SCHOOL. YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE THE TEST FROM THE OTHER DAY.

OH, THATTA BOY, FUSHI.

YOU ACTUALLY SHOWED UP TODAY.

AND HAIRO SAID HE'LL LEAVE EVENTUALLY.

TONARI... GUGU MIGHT GO BACK TO TAKUNAHA.

ARE... ARE YOU GOING TO LEAVE, TOO?

NO, I'M JUST READING FOR FUN.

I LIKE THIS PLACE. THERE ARE PLENTY OF BOOKS.

...

YOU STUDYING?

...

I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT ANY-THING LIKE THAT YET.

BUT I ALSO MIGHT LEAVE IF I FIND SOMETHING INTERESTING.

IT LOOKED LIKE EVERYONE WAS HAVING TROUBLE LIVING.

IF I HAD MADE THIS A MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE, NO ONE WOULD THINK ABOUT LEAVING, WOULD THEY?

HAHAHA! MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT!

IS THAT WHY YOU LOOK SO DOWN?

HEY... DON'T LUMP ME IN WITH THEM.

BUT YOU WANT A WORLD WITHOUT SUFFERING LIKE THE NOKKERS DO, HUH?

I'M JUST SAYING THAT YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT SUFFERING— WOULDN'T THAT BE BETTER?

I ONLY WANT TO MAKE EVERYONE'S DREAMS COME TRUE.

BUT INSTEAD ...

THEY'LL COME TRUE...

...WITH-OUT YOUR HELP.

PAIN AND ANXIETY ALWAYS COME TO THOSE WHO CHASE THEIR DREAMS.

YOUR DREAM IS TO GRANT ALL OF OURS, RIGHT?

AND THAT'S WHY YOU LOOK SO PAINED.

GUGU AND HAIRO ARE JUST LIKE YOU.

STILL, NO MATTER HOW PERFECT A PARADISE YOU TURN THIS PLACE INTO...

...YOU'RE NOT GONNA GET RID OF PEOPLE'S PAIN AND DOUBTS.

BECAUSE WE'RE HUMAN.

COULD I HELP...

...WITH WHAT'S BOTHER-ING YOU?

QUITE A DILEMMA, ISN'T IT?

WHEN YOU GAVE ME THIS YOUNG FORM, I ALSO GOT NEW WORRIES ALONG WITH IT, YOU KNOW?

AND JUST LIKE ME.

THIS PROBLEM IS MINE ALONE.

IT'S SO IMPORTANT, THAT I WANT TO KEEP IT TO MYSELF.

BUT I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU.

HEH! YEAH, MAYBE YOU COULD.

...THEY DON'T HAVE TO RUSH IT...

YEAH, BUT...

I'M SURE IT'S THE SAME FOR THE OTHERS.

THEY'RE LOOKING FOR THEIR OWN LIVES.

YOUR THIRD LIFE GOES FAST.

I CAN KEEP YOU ALIVE FOREVER...

THE DAYS JUST FLY BY.

FUSHI, HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CURIOUS ABOUT OUR LIVES?

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT OUR LAST THOUGHTS WHEN WE DIED BEFORE?

...OR WORRIED OVER HOW WE MIGHT LIVE FROM NOW ON?

I-

I HAVE...

YOU HAVE?

WELL, GOOD.

SEE, I TOLD YOU NOT TO WORK WITH ONE ARM.

I'M SORRY...

OOPS!!

ガッシャーン

CRASH

ACHOO!

YES, THAT'S IT.

BREATHE IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE AND...NOW!! HOLD YOUR BREATH!

CLACK

YOU DID IT!!

TWINGE ズキ…

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

TROMP

IT HURTS IN MY CHEST...

WHAT... IS THIS FEELING...?

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

SO WHY DOES MY CHEST HURT LIKE THIS...?

ISN'T THAT A GOOD THING?

THEY LOOKED HAPPY...

THEY WERE SMILING...

THAT MARCH COULDN'T USE CHOPSTICKS...

THE MARCH I KNEW COULDN'T WRITE LETTERS...

BYE-BYE!

SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW!

WILL THE DAY COME WHEN MY MARCH ENDS UP LIKE THOSE KIDS AT SCHOOL...?

BYE-BYE...

FU-CHAN.

キャ〜〜キャ〜〜

EEK

EEK

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

GOSH~

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

BYE-BYE, FU-CHAN!

BYE-BYE.

GOOD-BYE.

BYE-BYE, FUSHI.

SEE YA.

ドカン
BA-DUMP

ドカン
BA-DUMP

NO...

I'LL HELP YOU, GUGU!!

ゴォ WHRRR

I'LL DO THAT!!

OH, THANKS!

I'LL-

WHUMP

I'LL DO IT!!

YEAH!!

FU-CHAN, IT LOOKS LIKE...

...YOU'RE IN A GOOD MOOD TODAY, HUH!

HI

I STARTED TRYING TO GET ON EVERYONE'S GOOD SIDE AFTER ALL THIS TIME, BECAUSE IT STARTED FEELING LIKE THEY'RE GONNA LEAVE ME.

HEY THERE. ISN'T IT FUNNY?

MAYBE IT'S WEIRD FOR ME TO THINK THERE'S NO POINT LIVING WITHOUT EVERYONE...

"YOU'VE GOT ME"?

OR WERE YOU JUST LAUGHING?

HUFF

SHE TRIED DESPERATELY TO STOP YOU.

BUT YOU IGNORED THAT AND WENT INTO A SLUMBER TO CONTINUE YOUR FIGHT.

BON?! YOU'RE BACK?!

YOU KNOW, MARCH SAID SOMETHING SIMILAR ONCE.

THAT SHE WOULDN'T BE HAPPY AT ALL TO GROW INTO AN ADULT WITHOUT YOU.

THEN SHE USED POISON AND TOOK HER OWN LIFE.

Y- YEAH...

OKAY...

MAY I CONTINUE?

OH...

YES.

SHE COMMITTED SUICIDE RIGHT AT YOUR SIDE.

SHE DIDN'T SUFFER.

...HUH?

"TOOK HER OWN LIFE" ...?

HAIRO PLAYED THE VILLAIN.

SO IF YOU EVER QUESTIONED HIM, HE COULD CLAIM HE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE PAIN IN PEOPLE'S HEARTS.

HAIRO SAW IT THROUGH.

AS DID MARCH.

BUT TONARI, WHO MADE THE POISON, SUFFERED.

I TOLD HER THERE WAS NO REASON FOR HER TO FEEL BAD ABOUT IT, BUT NOTHING CONVINCED HER.

SEEING THAT, HAIRO SHOWED ME WHAT TO DO.

"ONE DAY IN THE FUTURE, FUSHI WILL SURELY AWAKEN."

"AND FOR THAT DAY'S SAKE, WE MUST SPREAD THE LEGEND—NOT OF FUSHI THE DEMON, BUT OF FUSHI THE MESSIAH."

AFTER HIS DEATH, THE COUNTRY OF SONIA TOOK OVER MANAGEMENT OF YOUR BODY DIRECTLY.

GUGU WAS THE FIRST MARTYR.

HE FOUGHT TO DEFEND YOU FROM THOSE THAT HATED YOU.

HE NEVER HAD MUCH OF A WILL TO LIVE, BUT MESSAR CONNECTED THE LANDS OF URALIS AND SONIA.

AND MESSAR KEPT WATCH OVER SONIA'S MOVEMENTS.

AND KAI KEPT ME CONNECTED TO URALIS.

BY THE TIME THE FIGHTING SETTLED DOWN, A TIME OF REST FINALLY CAME TO US—THE ONES WHO HAD LIVED SO LONG.

IN THE END, I WAS THE LAST TO GO.

BUT THERE WERE MANY BATTLES WITH THE CHURCH OF BENNETT'S PARISH COUNTRIES.

EACH TIME, OUR FRIENDS WENT TO THE BATTLEFIELD.

BUT NONE OF THEM DIED.



WE ALL WAITED FOR YOU...

...FOR CENTURIES.

EVERYONE IS WORKING THEIR HARDEST TO LIVE ALONG-SIDE YOU.

BUT YOU'RE WRONG.

CURRENTLY, YOU ARE WORRYING THAT EVERYONE IS GOING TO ABANDON YOU, RIGHT?

THEY DON'T DISLIKE YOU ENOUGH TO WANT TO LEAVE. IN FACT, I'M SURE THEY WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY.

YOU KNOW?

NORMALLY, HE'S ONLY KIND TO GIRLS.

MESSAR. CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?

WHO DO YOU THINK ASKED ME TO COME BACK SO FAST BECAUSE THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT YOU?

HOW MANY... MORE TIMES...?

A THOUSAND TIMES...?

OR A HUNDRED TIES...?

HOW MANY MORE TIMES WILL I SEE EVERYONE...?

HOW MANY MORE TIMES...CAN I EAT WITH EVERYONE?

TALK WITH EVERY-ONE?

HAVE FUN WITH EVERY-ONE...?

TH-TH-

THAT'S A LIE!!

ONE DAY...

OH, PLENTY OF TIMES!!

AS MANY AS YOU LIKE!!

...THE LAST TIME WILL DEFINITELY COME.

EVEN IF IT WAS ONLY ONE MORE TIME.

B-BE-BECAUSE TONARI SAID...

...EVERY-ONE'S GOING TO LIVE...AND DIE HERE.

I-I-I-I KNOW THAT EVERYONE WANTS TO... MAKE THEIR OWN DREAMS COME TRUE, NOT TO LIVE WITH ME FOREVER.

FUSHI.

WHETHER IT'S A THOUSAND TIMES OR A HUNDRED TIMES, CAN'T YOU THINK OF THAT AS ENOUGH?

I CAN'T!!

SORRY. IT WAS TIME FOR DINNER, SO WE CAME LOOKING FOR YOU.

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING IMPORTANT, HUH?

YEAH, LET'S LEAVE 'EM ALONE.

HEY NOW, I HEAR SOME BRAT THROWING A TANTRUM.

YOU OKAY, FUSHI?

I DON'T WANT TO...

I...

FUSHI.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL THE OTHERS HOW YOU FEEL?

TELL US, FUSHI.

U-

UM...

DON'T DIE...

...AND LEAVE ME BEHIND...

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

DON'T DIE AND LEAVE YOU?

PHEW~

WHAT'RE YOU TRYIN' TO SAY?

TH-

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT, MARCH.

IT'S OKAY, FU-CHAN. I'LL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.

I GET IT. YOU WANT US TO KEEP LIVING, DYING, AND LIVING AGAIN LIKE YOU?

FOREVER?

I MEAN, THAT'D BE GREAT...

THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE...

YOU WOULD?

L-L-

LIKE, IF YOU WERE TO DIE ONE DAY, I'D BRING YOU BACK... IF YOU'D STAY HERE AGAIN!

#150 Independence

...HATE ME!

I-I'M SORRY!

DON'T...

WHOA-OH-OH! SOMEBODY HELP ME!

BLUP ヒ,3,ㄴ BLUP ヒ,3,ㄴ

AAAND HE'S GONE.

OH.

FWISH!!

UH-OH!

HE'S GONNA SPILL IT!!

HHZSHHHHH HHH——o

HMPH...

NONE OF THEM UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL ANYWAY.

BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT IMMOR-TAL...

LIKE, WHAT WOULD THEY DO IF THEY WERE ME?

WHY AM I...LIKE THIS...?

SIGH... I PROBABLY DESTROYED EVERYONE'S IMAGE OF ME...

OH MAN...

THAT MUST'VE SOUNDED SO PATHETIC...

WHO DO I *WANT* TO BE LIKE...?

NO...

WHO SHOULD I TRY TO BE LIKE...?

HMM?

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

OH.

YOU'RE BACK AGAIN?

YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT ME.

I CAN'T BELIEVE FYE ACTUALLY TOOK ROOT IN THEM!

SNIFFLE

OH... SO I'M A MOTHER NOW?!

...FROM THE EGGS I LAID?!

WAIT, ARE THESE...

NEIGH

OH, I'LL HAVE TO NAME YOU, TOO, SOME-TIME...

YOU'LL BE SHUMAI, AND YOU CAN BE GYOZA.

THEN THERE'S RAMEN, AND TWICE-COOKED PORK, AND CHOP SUEY...

OH YEAH, I'D BETTER NAME YOU!

SHK ZZ SHK ZZ...

W-W-

WAIT A SECOND! WE JUST MET!

HUH? WHERE'RE YOU ALL GOING?

YOU AREN'T GOING INTO THE OCEAN, ARE YOU?

SHK ZZ SHK ZZ...

CHOMP

HEY, WHADDA YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?! YOU EVIL CRAB!!

NO!!

WHACK

GNAG

CRUNCH

BLUB ブクブク

IT'S DANGER-OUS OUT THERE...!!

FLAP FLAP

GET IN HERE, EVERY-BODY!

WHUMP WHUMP

WHUMP

STOP THAT!! DON'T EAT SHUMAI!!

WHOOSH WHOOSH

I KNOW YOU'LL BE BETTER OFF THAT WAY!!

COME LIVE WITH ME!!

FOR-EVER!!

WRIGGLE よじ...

よじ... WRIGGLE

DON'T...

...HATE ME.

SORRY...

DON'T HATE ME...

...RIGHT TO THE VERY END...

...WAS SO KIND...

EVERYONE...

SNIP

HWUH?!

OH!

HEY, WHAT THE HECK?!

WHOA!

HUH?

THATTA BOY, FUSHI-KUN.

NOW YOU'RE ACTING LIKE A JUNIOR HIGH STUDENT SHOULD.

FUSHI'S GONNA SPEND HIS DAY OFF SLEEPING~

WELL, IT DOES LOOK LIKE HE'S BEEN TRYING EXTRA HARD LATELY.

AND THE REST OF US SHOULD GET TO SLEEP SOON.

ふぁ YAWN.

LET'S GO IN TOGETHER, IDDY.

'KAY...

THE BATH'S ALL YOURS, TONARI-SAN.

HANG ON! I WILL AFTER THIS ENDS!!

WHY SHOULD I?!

YOU WAIT RIGHT THERE!!

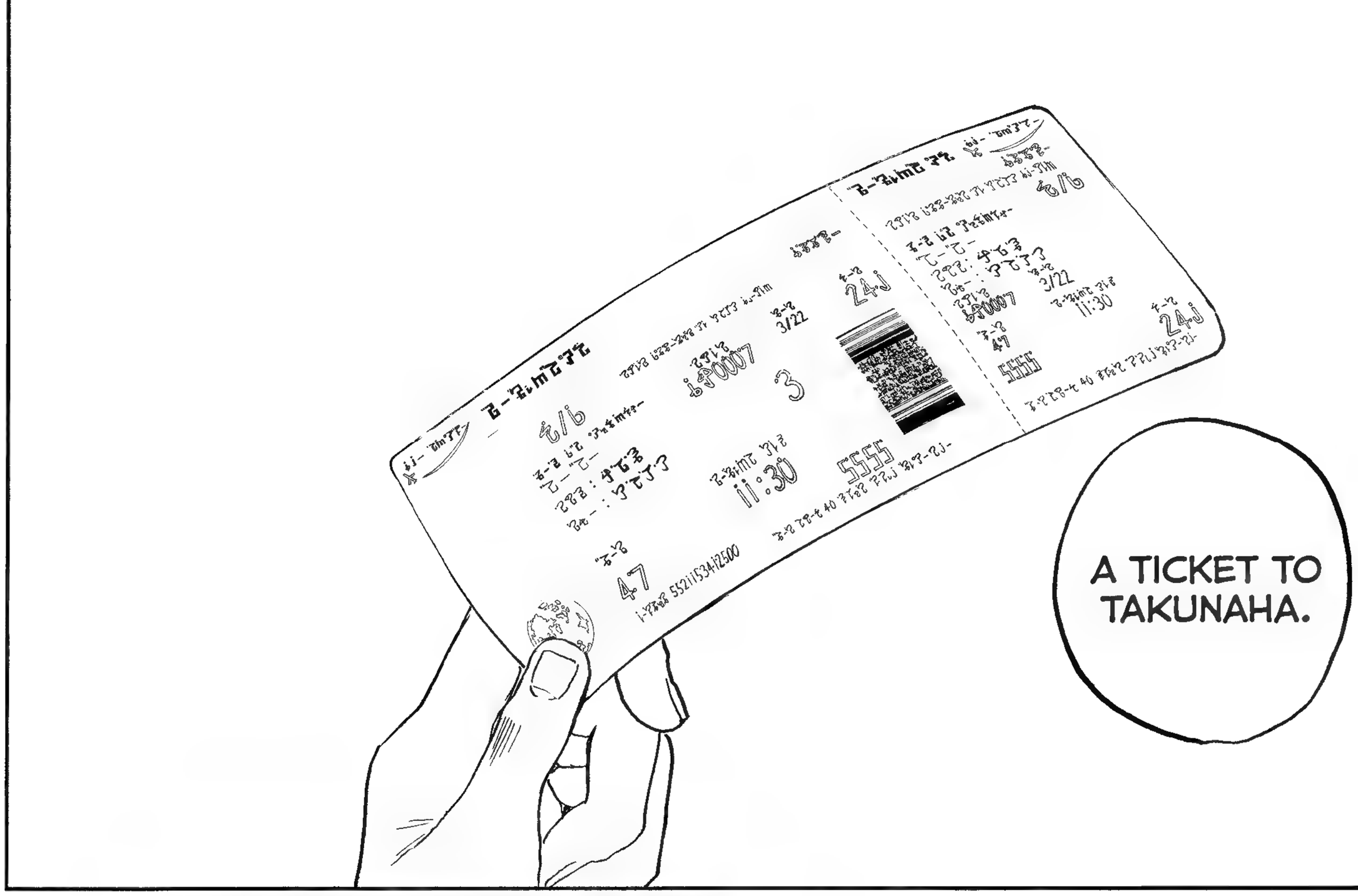
HA HA HA HA HA!

WELL, NOW IT'S TIME FOR A COMMERCIAL BREAK!!

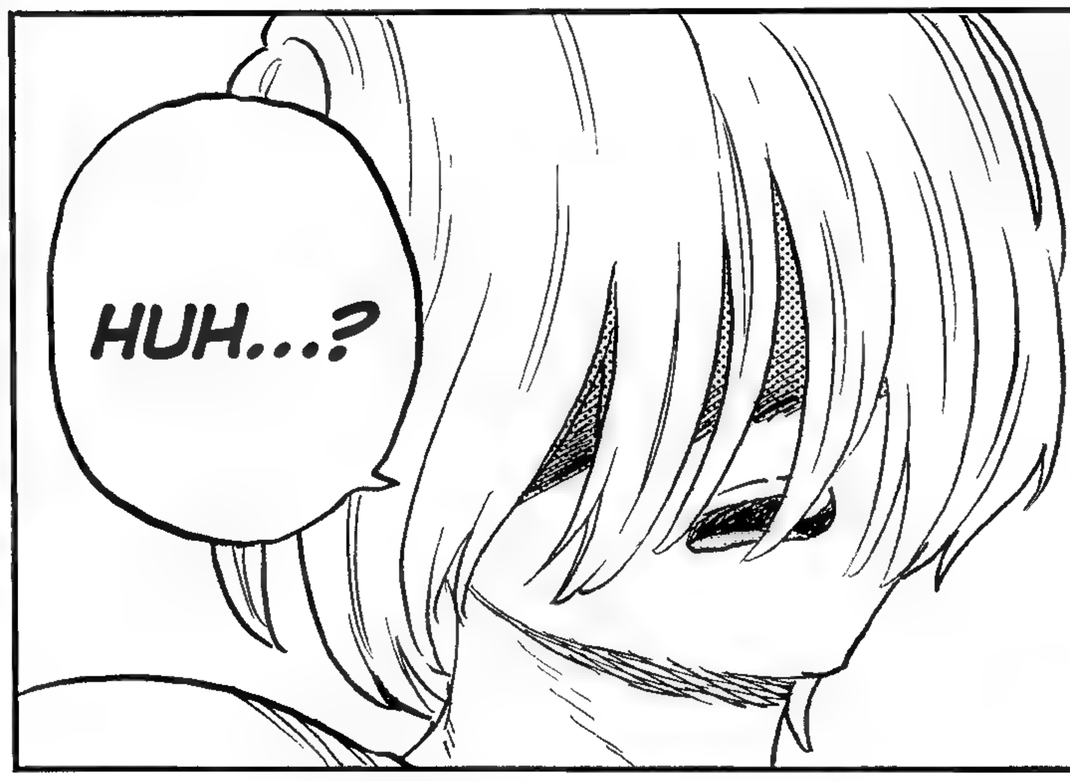
HMM? WHAT IS IT?

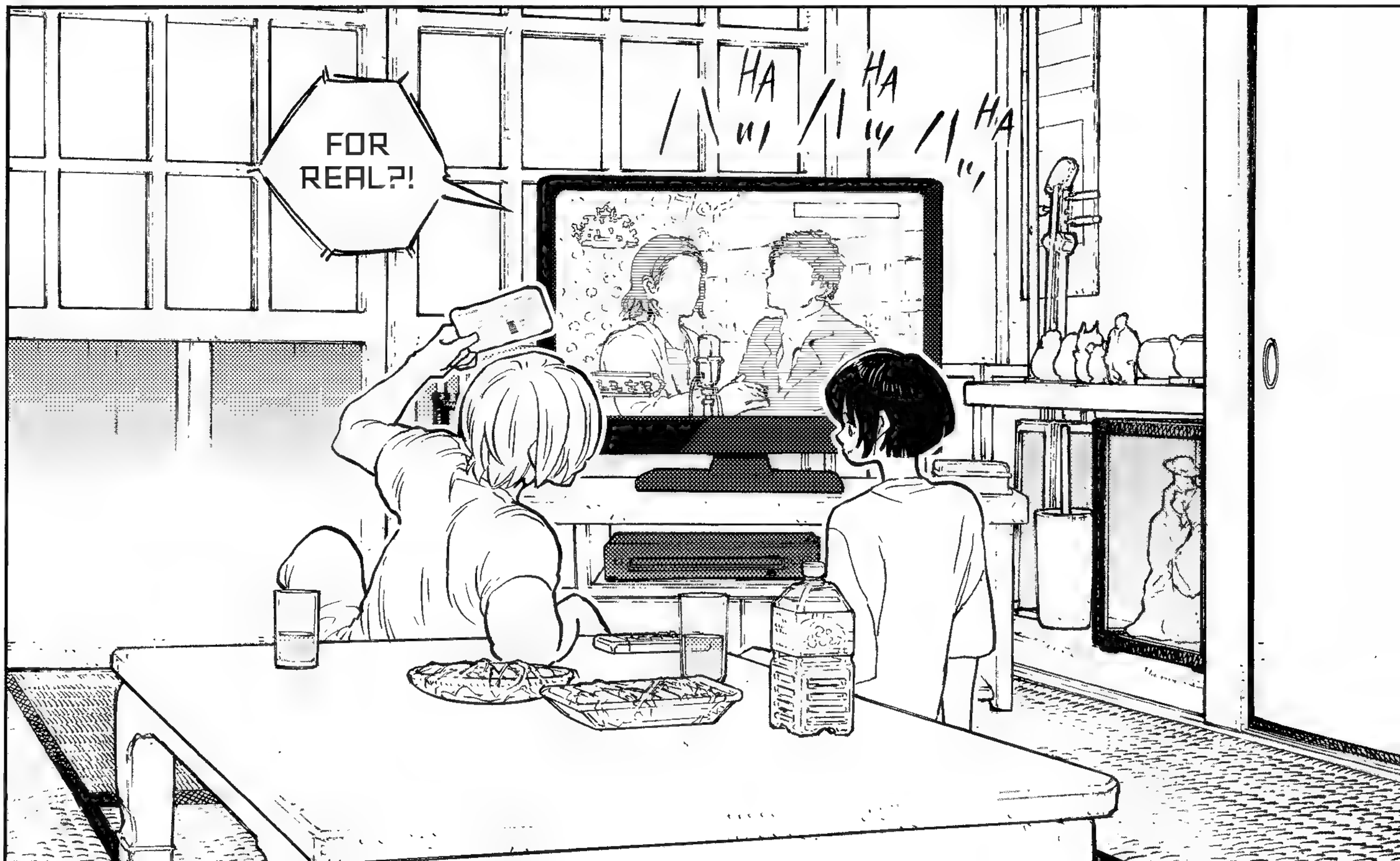
HUH?

OH RIGHT, TAKE THIS, GUGU.


A TICKET TO TAKUNAHA.




HUH...?


FOR REAL?!
HA
HA
HA

WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN?

HOW'D YOU GET THIS?

A TICKET TO TAKUNAHA ...?

I LEFT AN EMPTY SHELL HERE, SO I COULD DO IT IN SECRET.

I WORKED AND BOUGHT IT.

YOU'RE YOUNG BUT YOU'RE AMAZING!

I GOT A JOB AT A RESTAURANT.

YEP.

WHY DON'T YOU GO THIS SPRING BREAK?

FOR ME?!

SERI-OUSLY ?!

YOU GOT A PART-TIME JOB?!

UH-OH! I DON'T HAVE TIME TO WASTE!

I GOTTA GO PACK!!

THANK YOU! I'M SO HAPPY RIGHT NOW!!

WHEW! SERIOUSLY, FUSHI?! WAY TO GO!

OH RIGHT, YOU DON'T NEED TO PACK ANY-THING.

NO, I—

SHOVE SHOVE

ARE YOU GONNA JUST HEAD OVER AND WAIT FOR ME THERE?

BUY ONE! AND DO YOU HAVE A LIGHT JACKET? I'LL LEND YOU ONE OF MINE IF YOU WANT!!

CAN WE USE THESE POWER STRIPS THERE? OH, WHAT ABOUT A SMARTPHONE, FUSHI?

NO.

BON AND KAZUMITSU HELPED ME GET PERMISSION FROM THE SCHOOL...

...BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO LIVE THERE FOR AS LONG AS YOU LIKE.

I'M NOT GOING.

YOU AREN'T FORCING YOURSELF, ARE YOU, FUSHI? YOU SURE YOU WON'T START BAWLING LIKE A LITTLE BABY BECAUSE YOU MISS ME SO BAD?

I WON'T!!

...

OH...

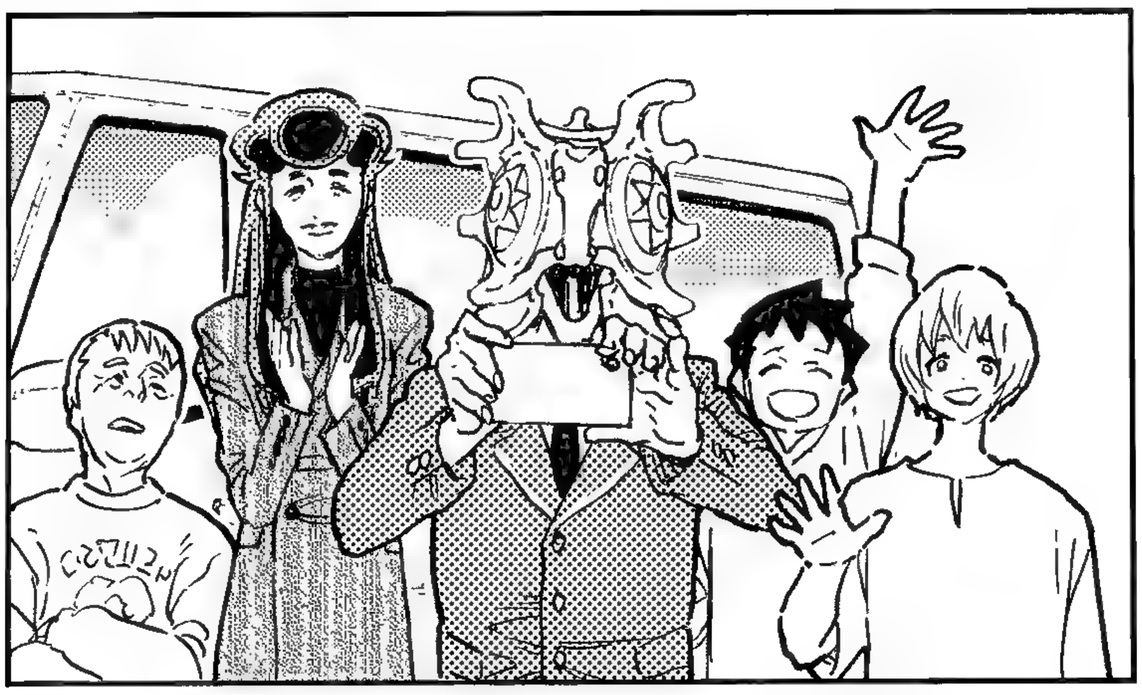
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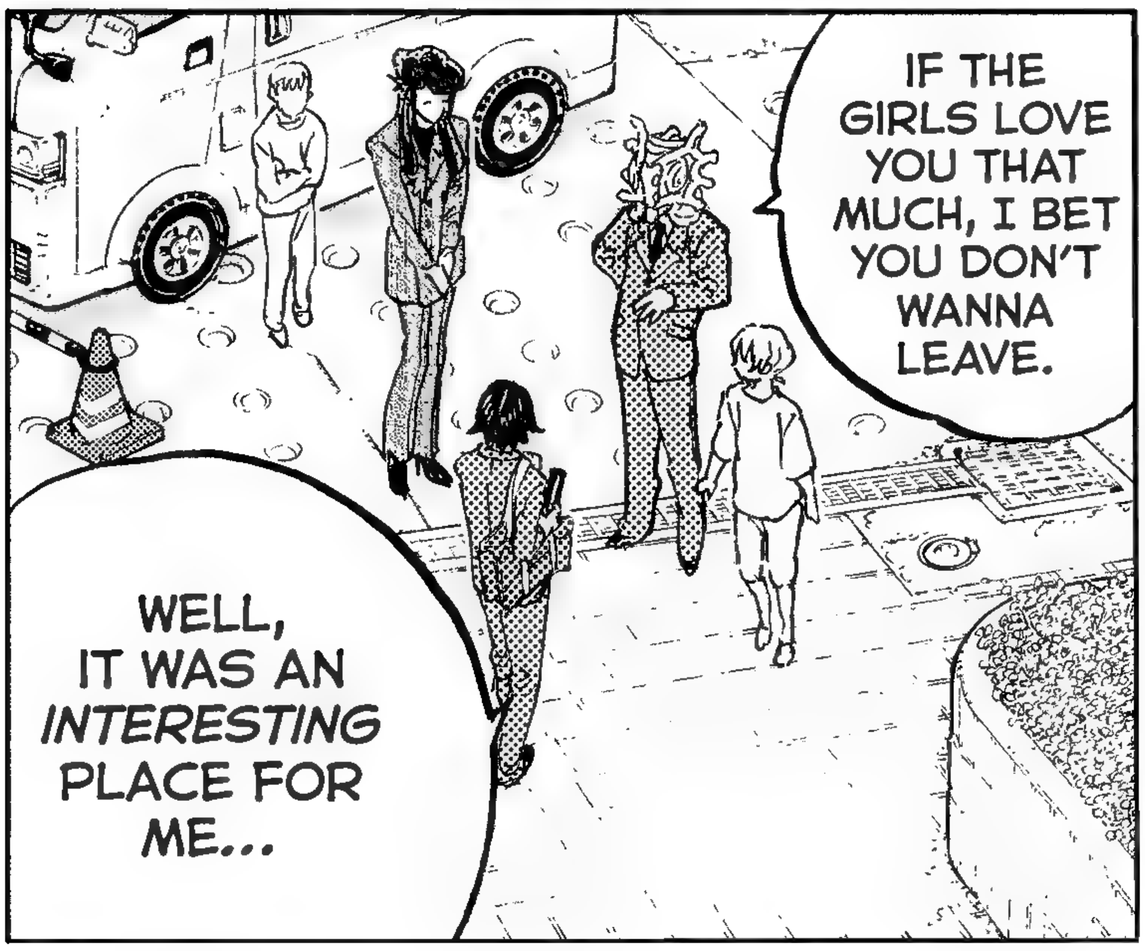
THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT...?

I MEAN IT.

AWW~ SENPAI, DON'T GRADUATE~

PLEASE STAY SINGLE, OKAY?!

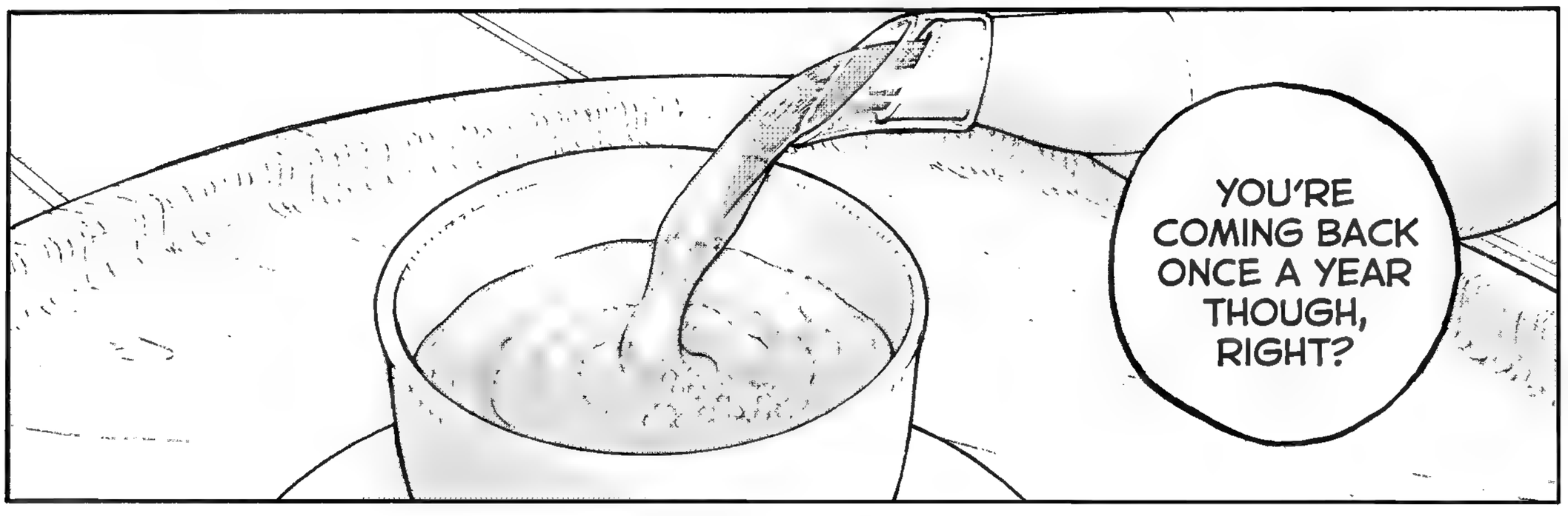



IF THE GIRLS LOVE YOU THAT MUCH, I BET YOU DON'T WANNA LEAVE.
WELL, IT WAS AN *INTERESTING* PLACE FOR ME...


CONGRAT-ULATIONS ON GRAD-UATING.


WHAP WHAP
WHOA! CUT THAT OUT! I'M NOT GOOD WITH THAT SAPPY STUFF!!


...BUT I'LL BE MUCH SADDER WHEN *YOU* LEAVE, GUGU.


YOU'RE COMING BACK ONCE A YEAR THOUGH, RIGHT?

THAT WOULD BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT, MARCH.

YOU THINK SO?

WELL, I'LL MAKE SURE I CAN COME BACK WHENEVER I NEED TO.

DOES ANYONE NEED MORE TEA?

BUT I'LL MISS YOU SO MUCH.

LET'S MAKE IT ONCE A WEEK.

OKAY, GU-CHAN?

HELLO!

YOO-HOO! YUKI-KUN!! WE DROPPED BY!

DON'T MIND IF I DO...

HMM? WHAT ARE YOU MAKING THERE?

PHEW~ I'M SO GLAD SPRING BREAK COINCIDED WITH THE FLOWERS BLOSSOMING!

YEAH! OH, COME SIT WITH US.

NICE TO MEET YOU, SIR~ MY NAME IS HANNA~

welcome.

WELCOME, MY OCCULT CLUB FRIENDS!!

WHAT A LOVELY HOME YOU HAVE HERE, SIR!

SO THIS IS YOUR PLACE, HUH, VICE PRESIDENT?!

YOU'RE GOOD AT MAKING DUMPLINGS, AREN'T YOU?!

THEY'RE DELICIOUS!

CHOMP, CHOMP!!

FIDGET もじ...

DUMP...

...LINGS.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

HMM?

...

THEN CAN I BE THE DADDY?!

YOU'RE THE MOMMY?!

GASP!

THIS...

...IS MY YOUNGEST, KANITARO...

RUSTLE もぞ...

YEP, I'M HIS MOMMY!

WOW, WHAT A BIG CRAB BOY! DID YOU RAISE HIM?

UM~ YOU'RE GUGU-SAN, AREN'T YOU?

WE HEARD ABOUT YOU FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT.

CAN YOU REALLY BREATHE FIRE?

OF COURSE!! COME ON!! LET'S MAKE A HOUSE OVER HERE!!

ゴォォォォ FWOOOM

OHHHHHH~

CAN I HAVE YOUR AUTO-GRAPH?!

SLOW DOWN A LITTLE~

HANNA-CHAN, OVER HERE!!

YEAH...

BUT SHE HASN'T BEEN TO SCHOOL LATELY...

I WISH MIZUHA-SENPAI WERE HERE, TOO...

I WAS JUST TALKING ABOUT GUGU.

HUH?

...

SO?

SOMETIMES, ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER.

COME ON, MESSAR. YOU NEED TO LEARN PROPER SMOKING ETIQUETTE.

YEAH~

I PLAN TO EVENTUALLY WORK AS AN APPRENTICE TO A BLACKSMITH, BUT FOR NOW I'M MAKING THESE SORTS OF THINGS INSTEAD OF SWORDS.

YOU CAN DO IT, KAI-SAN!

OH, RIGHT.

USE THIS...

...BEFORE KAZUMITSU YELLS AT YOU.

WHAT IS IT, AN ASH-TRAY?

DID YOU MAKE IT?

YES.

YES, IT'S A GIFT.

UGH!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "UGH"?

YEAH, DIDN'T YOU WANT ONE?

WHAT?! YOU GOT ME A BICYCLE?!

HUH?! YOU'RE GIVING THIS TO ME?!

ISN'T THAT NICE?

THANKS, MESSAR!!

I'VE GOT SOME-THING FOR YOU, TOO, HAIRO.

HOW KIND OF YOU, MESSAR.

おあ～ WOW～

I JUST HAPPENED TO HIT IT BIG AT THE TRACK, AND I JUST HAPPENED TO FEEL LIKE IT.

HA HA HA!

YAY! YAY!

EEK! EEK!

NO, I COULDN'T DO THAT.

YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO SEE ME OFF. YOU SHOULD'VE JUST STAYED HOME AND TOOK IT EASY.

RATTLE RATTLE

IT'S FINE.

IT FEELS LIKE... I HAVEN'T DONE MUCH BIG-BROTHERLY STUFF FOR YOU...

WELL, IF I'D GOTTEN ANY MONEY, I COULD'VE BOUGHT YOU PLENTY OF STUFF RIGHT NOW.

NO.

OH, HAVE YOU TRIED THESE?

THEY'RE GOOD. GET BON TO BUY YOU SOME SOMETIME.

OKAY.

THIS IS FAR ENOUGH, FUSHI...

YEAH...

...

OKAY...

...

YEAH...

EVEN AFTER WE GO OUR SEPARATE WAYS...

...ONE DAY...

...WE'LL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN... WON'T WE?

YEAH...

OKAY.

I'LL BE ROOTING FOR YOU FROM OVER IN TAKUNAHA.

BUT I'LL DO MY BEST TO STICK IT OUT.

YEAH.

I GET THE FEELING THAT'D BE FOR THE BEST.

WELL, JOKES ASIDE, COME VISIT ME WHENEVER YOU WANT.

WHY EVEN ASK, THOUGH, RIGHT?! YOU CAN GET TO TAKUNAHA IN UNDER TEN SECONDS, CAN'T YOU?! FUSHI!!

WHAP WHAP

O-OKAY, I'LL BUY ONE SOON!!

TELL ME WHEN YOU BUY A SMART-PHONE!

SEE YA!

By the way...

...I don't know how these planes fly.

I could never ride one.

You're not scared, Gugu?

Yeah, but I've gotta get used to this stuff.

There's no telling what kind of vehicles people'll come up with in a hundred or a thousand years. We've gotta keep up with civilization.

You and me both.

HEH HEH!

#151 What Connects Us



TO ALL THE INCOMING FIRST-GRADERS, CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ENROLLMENT.

WE WELCOME YOU TO MINAMOTO ELEMENTARY.

HNPH!!

!!

LET'S ALL TRY TO GET ALONG!!

HELLO!!

MY NAME IS MARCH!!

ピク TWITCH

THAT'S A WEIRD NAME.

MARCH...? CHAN?

OKAY.

YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BRING STUFF LIKE THAT TO SCHOOL! MY MOMMY TOLD ME~

ISN'T IT CUTE?! MY MOMMY MADE IT FOR ME!!

WHAT'S THAT ON YOUR HEAD?

NICE TO MEET YOU!! I'M MARCH!! LET'S BE FRIENDS!!

LET ME SEE IT~

YOURS IS JUST A DECORATION.

MINE ARE *HAIR TIES*~

HMM? WHY NOT?

YEAH, A CROWN.

A CROWN ...?

YOU'VE GOT THINGS IN YOUR HAIR, TOO.

YOUR HEAD? SINCE WHEN?

THEN MY HEAD CAME WITH THIS, TOO!!

MY HAIR TIES *CAME* WITH THESE RIBBONS ATTACHED, SO IT'S ALLOWED.

DON'T YOURS HAVE DECO-RATIONS, TOO?!

SINCE FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO!!

SENSEI! WE'VE GOT A LIAR IN THIS SCHOOL!

HA HA HA

I'M NOT LYING!!

HA HA HA

YOU LIAR!!

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS?!

HRNGH...

I HOPE THINGS GO WELL FOR MARCH-CHAN.

GOOD LUCK, AIKO.

THEN SEE YOU LATER.

OH, I'M GOING THIS WAY.

IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF IT WITH CASH.

BON'S THERE, TOO.

I'M SURE SHE'LL BE FINE. SHE'S THE SOCIABLE TYPE.

MORNING.

YOO-HOO.

OKAY!

DID YOU SEE THE SHEET?

WE'RE IN THE SAME CLASS AGAIN, FUSHI-KUN.

HEY.

HMM?

TOO BAD.

GAH! WE'RE IN A DIFFERENT CLASS...

HER NAME ISN'T ON HERE ANYWHERE.

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN TO HER?

YOU GUYS ARE CLOSE WITH MIZUHA, RIGHT?

WHAT ?!

SOMETHING TO DO WITH HER FATHER'S JOB.

SHE TRANS-FERRED.

NOT A THING...

N-NO.

YOU REALLY DIDN'T KNOW, HANNA-SAN?

SHE DIDN'T TELL US!!

WHAT ?!

WELL... IT WAS SUDDEN...

HUH.

YOU WEREN'T WEARING YOUR HAIR TIE, SO I THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS UP.

ピンポーン

DING-

DONG

HUH? HANG ON! WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I'VE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE ON THEIR PLACE, BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SIGNS OF THEM MOVING.

MAYBE THEY ALREADY MOVED...

LET'S GO. I DON'T THINK SHE'S GONNA ANSWER.

...

HOW'D IT GO?

COME TO THINK OF IT, TOMORROW'S MIZUHA-SENPAI'S BIRTHDAY...

...

THANK GOOD-NESS...

THEN THERE'S STILL TIME TO...

BUT SHE WOULDN'T SEE US.

LOOKS LIKE SHE'S THERE.

WHAT CAN WE DO...

...TO MAKE HER SMILE AGAIN...?

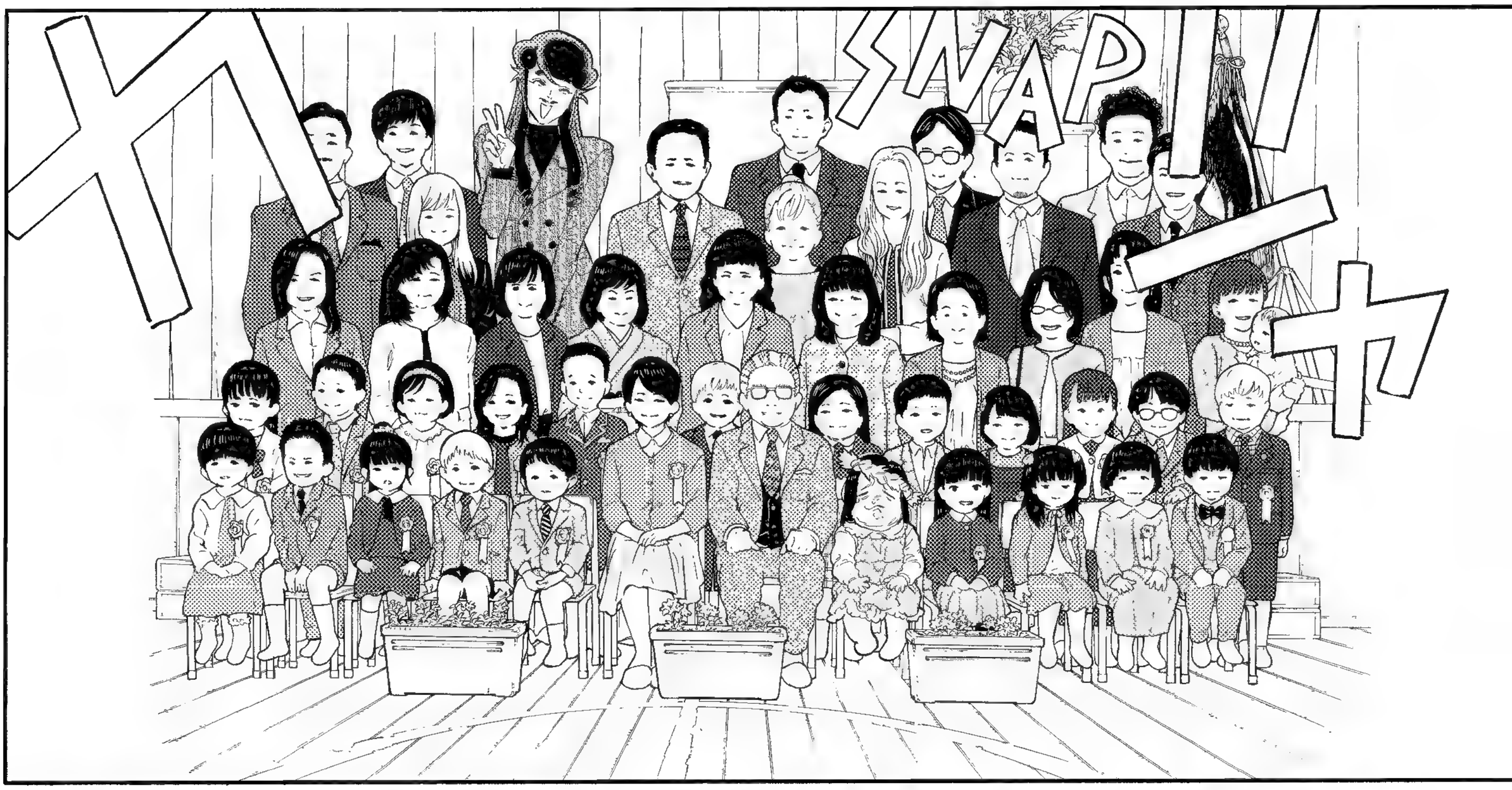
YUKI-KUN...

I WANT TO SEE MIZUHA-SENPAI SMILE AGAIN.

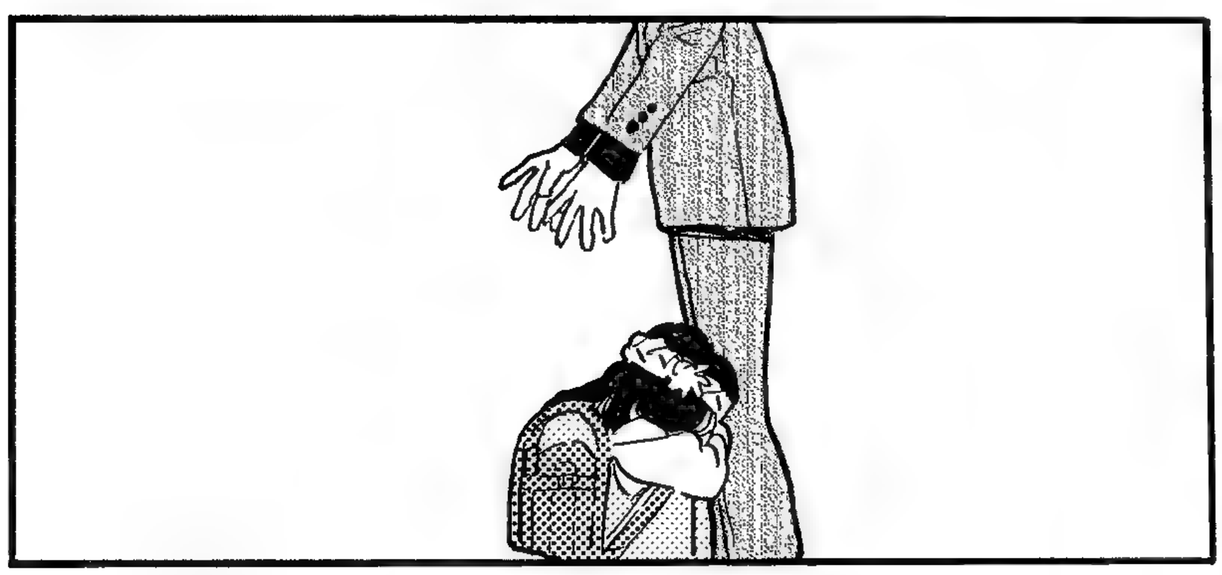
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SEE THAT.

OKAY, SAY CHEESE~









DID YOU HAVE FUN?

GREAT JOB, MARCH!

HRNG...

NN!

WEH!

URK!

OH? WHAT'S THE MATTER?

DID SOME-THING BAD HAPPEN?

...

...

LOOK, MARCH, MIMORI GOES TO THIS SCHOOL, TOO.

HI THERE, MIMORI-KUN.

BON-SA...

OH.

NO...

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

HMM? DID YOU SAY SOME-THING?

WELL, I THINK SHE HAD A BAD TIME AT SCHOOL.

OH...

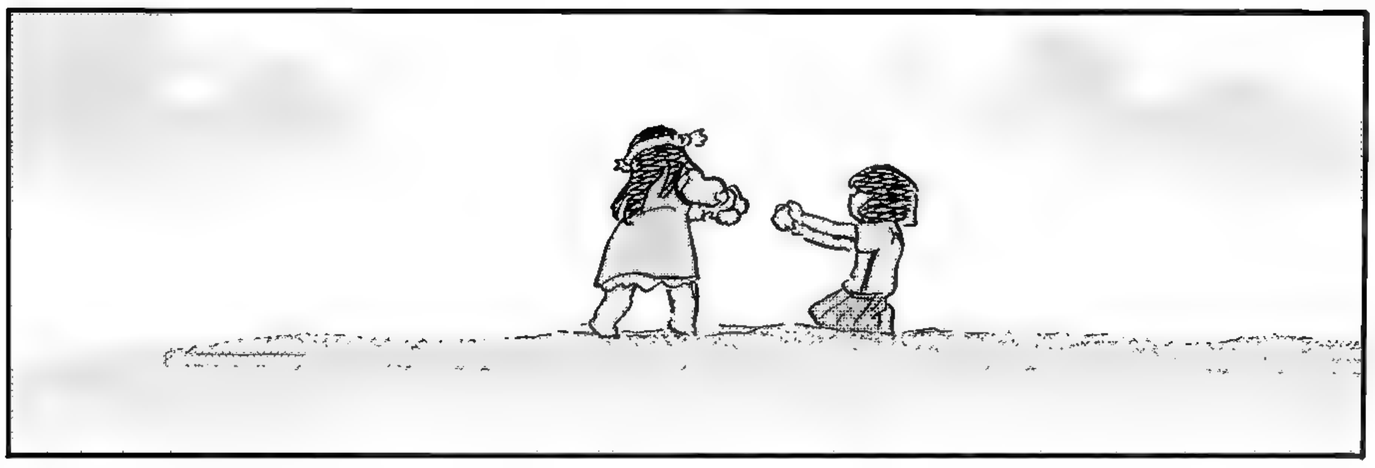
THE ONE FUSHI-SAN MENTIONED BEFORE...?

MARCH ...?

HIS MOTHER ...?

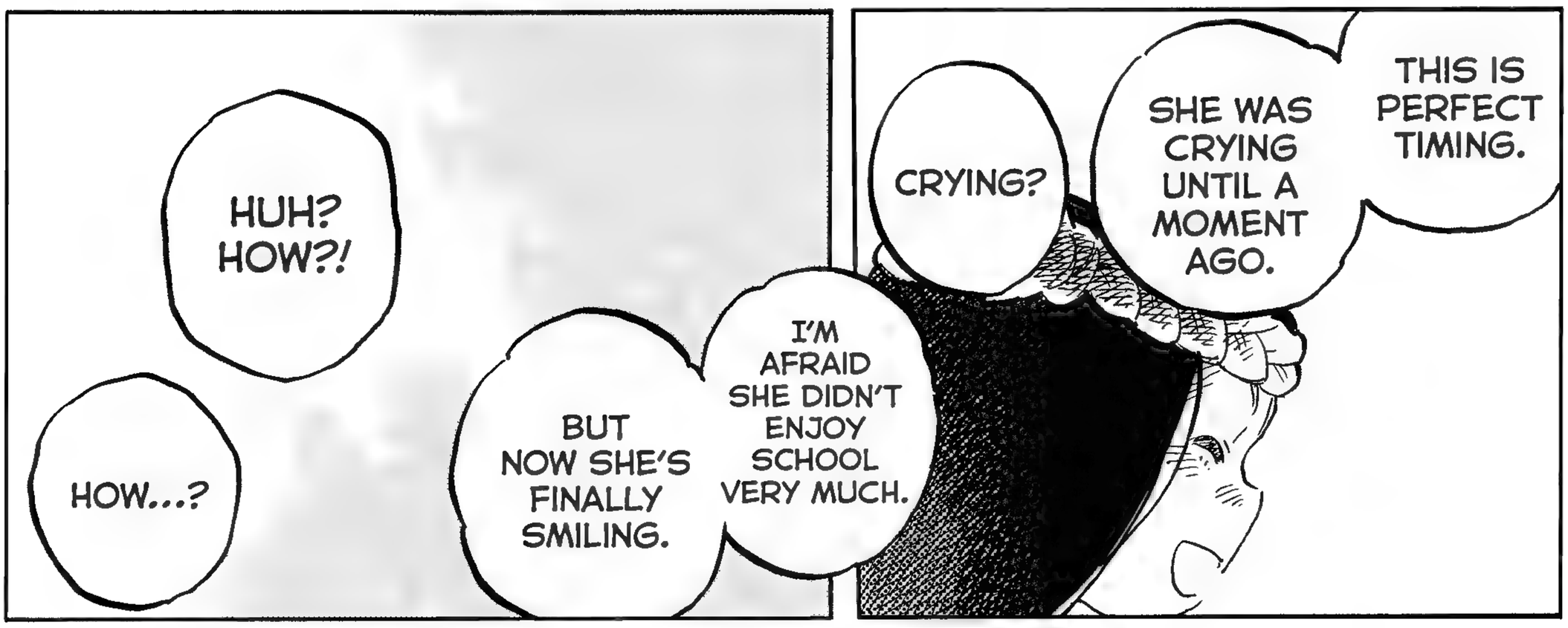
!

JUST LIKE ME... HUH?




OH.
HI THERE, FUSHI.


I GOT A MESSAGE FROM GUGU.
HE WANTS TO SEE MARCH ALL DRESSED UP.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN WITH YOU?
MAKING MUD BALLS WITH MIMORI-KUN.
WHAT'S MARCH DOING?


HUH? HOW?!
HOW...?
BUT NOW SHE'S FINALLY SMILING.
I'M AFRAID SHE DIDN'T ENJOY SCHOOL VERY MUCH.
CRYING?
SHE WAS CRYING UNTIL A MOMENT AGO.
THIS IS PERFECT TIMING.




SQUEAL~
WE BROUGHT THE WATER~

SOMETHING THAT REMAINED EVEN AFTER MIMORI LEFT.

SOMETHING THAT MAKES A CONNECTION EVEN ACROSS TIME.

SOMETHING THAT BREAKS THE ICE BETWEEN PEOPLE.

SOMETHING THAT BRINGS SMILES.

OH.

THE SECRET ATTENTION-GRABBING TECHNIQUE...

"COME TO THINK OF IT, TOMORROW'S MIZUHA-SENPAI'S"...

...I'LL SEND HER A PRESENT.

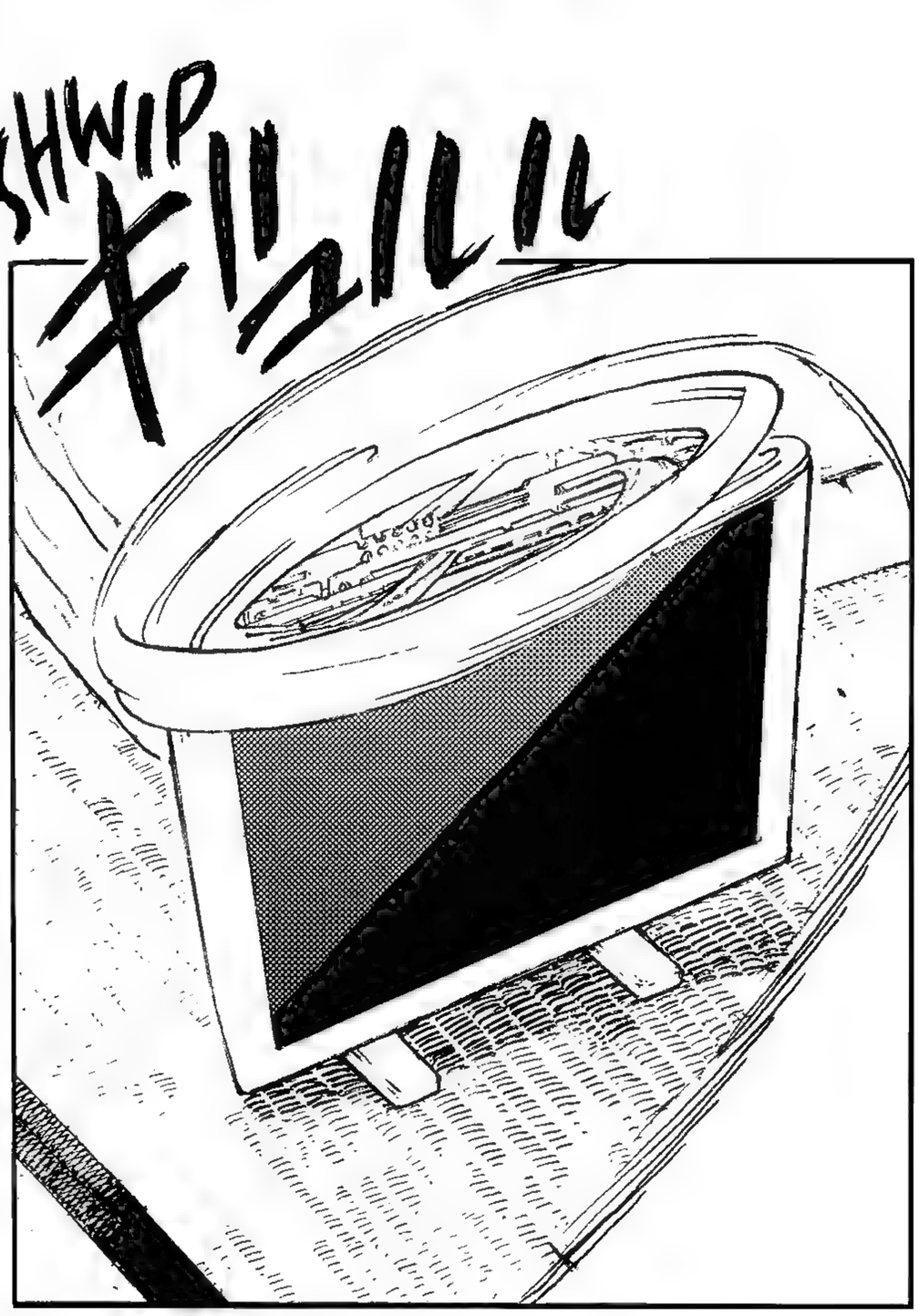
MAYBE...

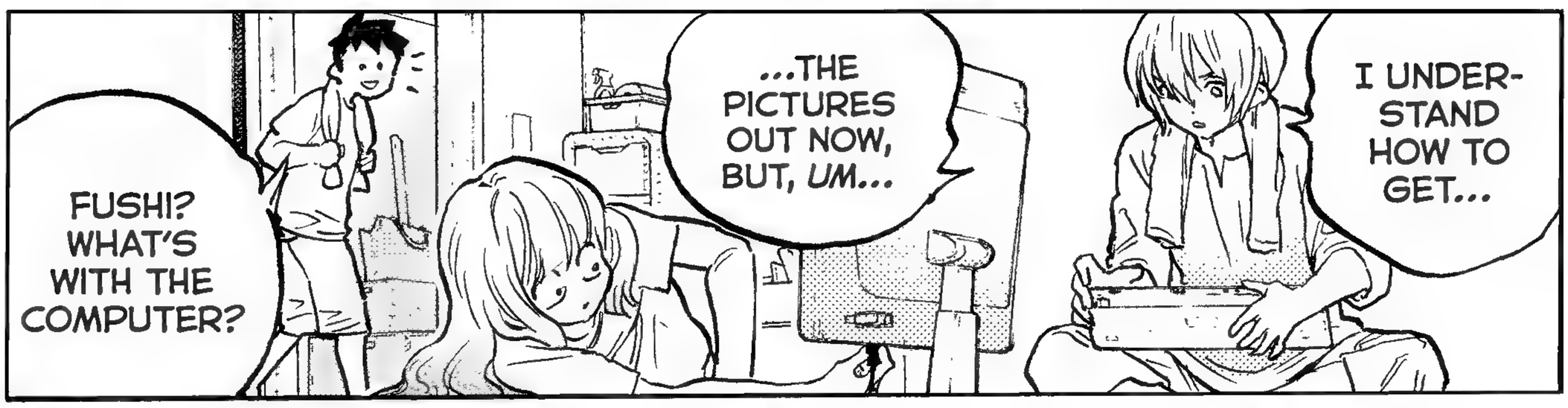
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME~♫

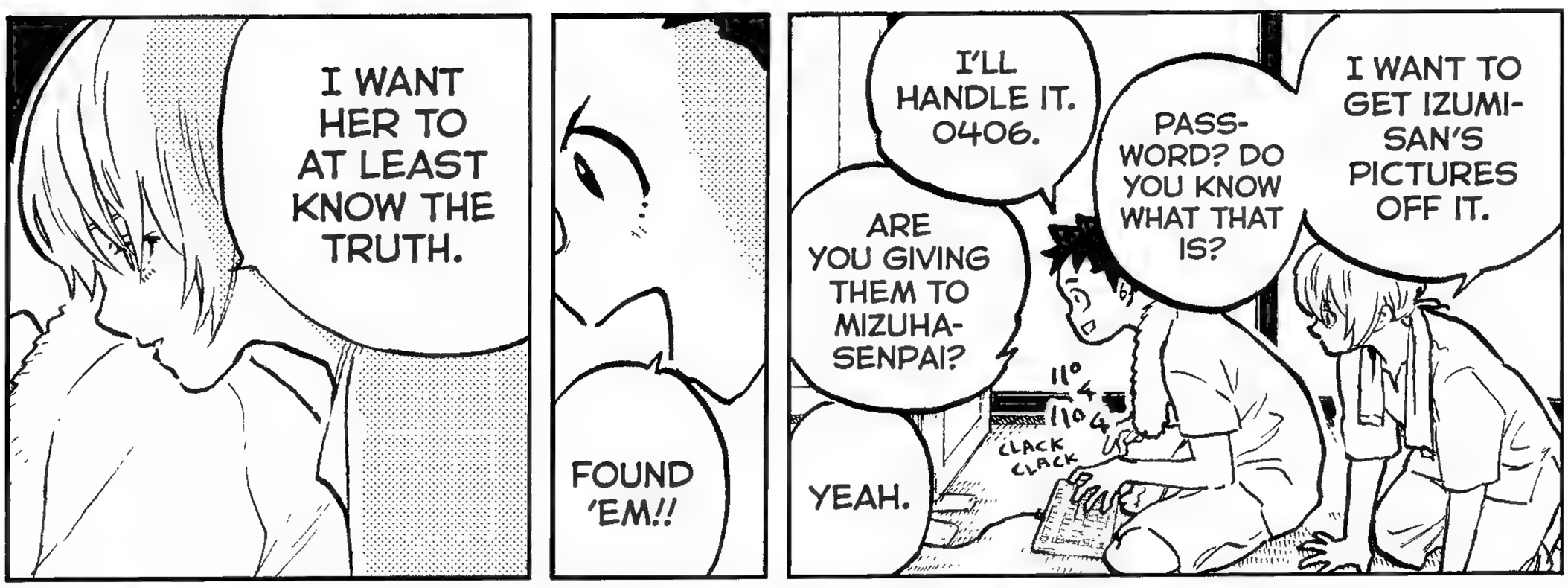
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME~♫

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME~♫


I
THONK


SHWIP
#11


FUSHI? WHAT'S WITH THE COMPUTER?
...THE PICTURES OUT NOW, BUT, UM...
I UNDER-STAND HOW TO GET...


I WANT HER TO AT LEAST KNOW THE TRUTH.
FOUND 'EM!!
I'LL HANDLE IT. 0406.
ARE YOU GIVING THEM TO MIZUHA-SENPAI?
YEAH.
PASS-WORD? DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT IS?
I WANT TO GET IZUMI-SAN'S PICTURES OFF IT.
1104
1104
CLACK CLACK


YEAH, I'LL BET NOT.
...DIDN'T WANT TO FORGET THESE SIGHTS.
MIZUHA'S MOTHER...

ALL RIGHT! THAT'S ALL OF 'EM!!

WHAT'RE YOU GUYS DOING?

WE MADE MIZUHA-SENPAI A BIRTHDAY PRESENT!!

A PHOTO ALBUM!!

WHAP WHAP WHAP WHAP WHAP

OH, CRAP! SCHOOL!

NICE IDEA!

GO ON AHEAD! I LEFT A BODY THERE!!

HMM, I THINK IT SHOULD BE CUTER.

I GOT A BUNCH OF STICKERS YESTERDAY, SO I'LL PUT THEM ON IT!!

IT LOOKS PRETTY GOOD FOR SOMETHING WE MADE IN ONE NIGHT.

NICE!!

THERE.

CLUNK

NOTHING.

YOU'RE LATE.

WHAT WERE YOU UP TO?

BLINK

WHY SO GLUM, GUYS?

SOME-THING UP?

WHY?

I DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD WORRY ABOUT IT THAT MUCH, HANNA...

BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO...

YOU KNOW... SINCE MIZUHA JUST VANISHED ON US... I WAS WONDERING IF WE SHOULD REALLY LEAVE THINGS LIKE THIS.

OH... I WANTED THEIR ADVICE...

I WAS JUST CATCHING THEM UP ON EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED!

THEN DO YOU KNOW WHAT SHE'S DOING NOW, FUSHI-KUN?

I THINK WHAT SHE'S ***DOING*** IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ***WHERE*** SHE IS...

...

BUT...

LET'S KEEP IT SIMPLE!

YOU WANNA SEE MIZUHA-SENPAI AGAIN, DON'T YOU, PRESIDENT HANNA?!

EVEN IF WE DID MANAGE TO SEE HER, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

AND IF WE SAID THE WRONG THING, THAT'D PROBABLY BE THE END OF IT ALL...

WELL...

NO.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE'S DOING, EITHER.

BUT I THINK ALL WE NEED TO DO IS REMIND HER THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WORRIED ABOUT HER.

...SEE HER...

I WANT TO...

...

...I WANT TO SEE HER AGAIN!!

DING-DONG-DING-DONG-

I DID MAKE HER A BIRTHDAY PRESENT...

THEN COME ON! SHE MIGHT NOT LET US IN, BUT WHY DON'T WE GO TO MIZUHA-SENPAI'S HOUSE?!

YEAH...

SKREEK

CHACK

YOU MUST BE THE ONE...

...WHO PUT THIS IN OUR MAILBOX.

ARE YOU HER FATHER? THAT'S A BIRTHDAY PRESENT FOR MIZUHA-SENPAI!!

YES, I AM.

SORRY, BUT I'M SURE SHE WOULD REFUSE IT.

SHE HAS CAST OFF HER PAST.

WE HAVE NO PLANS TO RETURN HERE.

SHE WILL NOT BE BACK.

III

SOMEWHERE YOU KIDS COULD NOT REACH HER, EVEN IF I TOLD YOU.

WH-WHERE ARE YOU MOVING, SIR?!

TOMORROW, I AM LEAVING WITH MY DAUGHTER.

WE ARE GOING FAR ENOUGH AWAY THAT YOU CAN NO LONGER PLAY "FRIENDS."

I HOPE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND.

THUNK

WASN'T IT?

NICE OF HIM TO BRING IT BACK TO US.

YEAH...

IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S NO POINT IN GOING.

VROOM OO...

HUH? BUT I STUCK ALL THE PICTURES IN REAL GOOD, DIDN'T I, FUSHI?

A PHOTO ALBUM...

OH, THIS FELL OUT.

WHAT IS THAT ANYWAY?

WHAT? I THINK WE'D BETTER JUST GIVE UP ON THAT.

YOU'D ONLY BE BOTHERING THEM...

YOU KNOW...

I THINK I'M GONNA GO SEE MIZUHA AFTER ALL...

I GOTTA ASK HER OUT!!

HEY, YEAH!!

I STILL HAVEN'T TOLD HER HOW I FEEL!!

I KNOW, RIGHT?!

YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY GO, YUKI-KUN!!

LET'S DO IT, VICE PRESI-DENT!!

Y-

SO! I'M GOING TO SEE HER, TOO!!

BECAUSE THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE!!

WE'LL BE RIGHT THERE TO CHEER YOU ON!!

YES, THE GREAT TREE IN RENRIL IS A SYMBOL OF ENVIRON-MENTAL PROTECTION, AFTER ALL.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GROUPS PROBABLY FIERCELY OPPOSED IT BECAUSE THE CO_2 REDUCTION GOALS STILL HAVE NOT BEEN MET...

LAST WEEK, THE INTERNATIONAL UPROOTER ALLIANCE TEMPORARILY CEASED ITS UPROOTING ACTIVITIES. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE INFLUENCED THIS DECISION?

OH! BON-SAN IS ON TV AGAIN!!

GREAT TO BE HERE.

OUR GUEST TODAY IS SPRING ROLL-SAN FROM THE TASTY PEACH FOUNDATION, A MAN KNOWLEDGE-ABLE ABOUT THE RENRIL ROOT REMOVAL ISSUE. THANK YOU FOR COMING TODAY.

HE'S A CELEB-RITY!!

THIS IS LIVE.

SURE...

THE PRINCIPAL IS *FURIOUS.*

HEY, GRAMPS, CAN YOU TELL BON-SAN NOT TO SLACK OFF ON HIS JANITOR JOB?

WHY SHOULD I–

I PUT A SPARE BODY IN THE JANITOR'S ROOM TO MAKE IT EASIER TO GET TO SCHOOL.

BECAUSE I'M SKIPPING SCHOOL TODAY.

CAN YOU MAKE SURE IT'S STILL HIDDEN FOR ME?

WHAT?

HUH?

DO YOU HAVE A SECOND, TONARI?

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT DAY.

YOU UNDER-STAND, DON'T YOU?

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO UNDER-STAND?!

I'M GONNA HELP HIM.

THE THING IS...I'M GONNA GO ASK MIZUHA-SENPAI OUT!! TODAY'S MY LAST CHANCE!!

EXCUSE ME?

14 FLAP

SHWOOP

WHUMP!

THEY WENT TO HER GRAND-FATHER'S PLACE... BUT THEY'RE PROBABLY UNDER-GROUND.

THEY TOOK THEIR CAR AND EVERY-THING.

IT'S PROBABLY CONNECTED TO THAT PLACE NIXON AND THE OTHERS WENT.

THEN IT'S FINALLY TIME TO ENTER THE ENEMY'S STRONG-HOLD!!

WELCOME BACK, FUSHI. HOW'D IT GO?

O-R-C FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!

LET'S GO!! O-R-C!! FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT!!

I'VE NEVER PLAYED HOOKY BEFORE...

Y-YES.

RIGHT?! YOU WANNA GO, TOO, DON'T YOU, HANNA-SENPAI?!

OF COURSE WE ARE! VICE PRESIDENT YUKI'S LOVE LIFE IS RIDING ON THIS!

HUH? I THOUGHT THAT'S WHAT WE WERE DOING?

WAIT, YOU'RE ALL COMING, TOO?

THIS WAS A CLUB TRIP?

EXCUSE ME, FUSHI!! *I'M* THE LEADER OF THE OCCULT RESEARCH CLUB!!

OKAY!

ROGER THAT.

OH, WELL... FINE, BUT I'M SENDING YOU BACK THE SECOND IT GETS DANGEROUS.

OKAY, THEN THIS IS WHERE WE'LL ENTER.

WE CAN GET IN THROUGH HERE!!

PHEW~ I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT!!

W- WE'RE ENEMIES ?!

WELL, LET'S AT LEAST GO INTRODUCE OURSELVES TO HER GRAND-FATHER.

NO. WHAT'S THE POINT OF INTRODUCING OURSELVES TO THE ENEMY?

THE TUNNEL HAS A METAL DOOR ON IT. I COULD BREAK THROUGH IF NEED-BE, BUT IT'D TAKE TIME.

DOES IT HAVE TO BE HERE?

WHOA!!

!!

THE ENTRANCE TO A MAZE CITY!!

EACH OF THESE TUNNELS LEADS SOMEWHERE...

...AND WHERE THEY LEAD IS CONNECTED TO WHERE MIZUHA IS!

IS THAT WHAT YOU WERE GETTING AT...?

EEK!! NO WIFI?!

OVER THERE. THE ONE FURTHEST TO THE RIGHT.

YOU CAN'T JUST TYPE THAT INTO A SEARCH BAR, DUDE.

AND THAT'S *MY* CUE— THE BRAINS OF THE OPERATION.

ALLOW ME, SENBA, TO PINPOINT A ROUTE ON OUR MAP.

HE CAN CONNECT TO THE ROOTS THROUGHOUT THE TUNNELS AND SENSE THE RIGHT PLACE.

TRY NOT TO SLIP.

H-H-HOW DID HE KNOW?!

...IS OUR ROUTE TO THE ENEMY'S BASE.

AND THE PLACE THE ROOTS *CAN'T* ENTER...

YEAH, AS LONG AS IT'S SOMEWHERE THESE ROOTS CAN GET IN.

THEN... YOU KNOW WHAT'S UP AHEAD, TOO?!

THROUGH HERE.

HNPH!

HEH! A METAL DOOR, EH?

LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR *ME*—THE BRAWNS OF THE OPERATION!

ガシャ CRICK...

PLOP

YANK

TAMAKI-KUN?! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

MY ARRR-RRM!!

I KNEW YOU COULD DO IT, FUSHI!

YAY, IT OPENED!!

THANKS TO NAND.

YOU THINK WE'LL BE HOME BEFORE DARK?

HUH?

FROM HERE ON, IT REALLY *IS* A MAZE.

THE ONLY THING I CAN TELL IS THAT ALL THE PATHS LEAD TO METAL DOORS, AND WE WON'T KNOW WHERE THOSE LEAD UNTIL WE OPEN THEM.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOU CAN'T EVEN FIND THE GOAL WITH YOUR POWERS?

A OUIJA BOARD!!

TA-DAH!!

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S FINALLY *MY* TIME TO SHINE!

I BROUGHT SOMETHING TO SHOW US THE WAY!

RUSTLE RUSTLE

GATHER 'ROUND, O.R.C.!!

RIGHT?! THE SPIRITS WILL OPEN A PATH FOR US WITH THIS!!

WHAT'S THAT? IT LOOKS IMPRES-SIVE.

THESE BOYS ARE ALWAYS PLAYING AROUND LIKE THIS.

...

SPIRITS, O SPIRITS, HEED MY CALL!! I DON'T CARE WHO IT IS, SOME-BODY JUST TELL US WHERE TO FIND MIZUHA-SENPAI!!

FWISH

IT MOVED!!

RIGHT!!

"GHT"...

YOU MUST BE JOKING...

"RI"...

WHO?

PROBABLY FEN AND NIXON!!

WHO MOVED IT?

THIS WAY! LET'S GET GOING!

WHICH MEANS...

LOOKS LIKE IT.

ISN'T THIS...

...THAT PLACE FEN AND NIXON TOLD US ABOUT?

LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE LINE.

YOU SHOULD ALL GO HOME.

...MIZUHA IS UP AHEAD?!

THAT DOOR SEEMS HEAVY...

CAN WE OPEN IT...?

WHAT?! BUT WE CAME ALL THIS WAY TOGETHER!!

YEAH, I WANTED TO LET YOU SEE HER, IF POSSIBLE...

...BUT I CAN'T IF THAT'S THE ONLY WAY IN.

WRIGGLE ﾌﾘﾘ

I DOUBT THOSE NOKKER DOORS WILL LET YOU THROUGH.

THAT'S NASTY~

WHOA...

YIKES!

WE'LL GET GOING, THEN...

OKAY!

YEAH, AND YOU TAKE CARE OF THE OTHERS, YUKI.

BE CAREFUL, FUSHI!! MAKE A SPARE BODY JUST IN CASE!

WHOOSH

SLAM

TUMP

GLOOMP

SHWIP-WHIP

SHRIP

CRICK CRACK

CRICK CRACK

SPLAT

SPLAT

POP

WELCOME, FUSHI-SAMA!!

TO YOUR ETERNITY

TO YOUR ETERNITY

YES~ I NEED TO RETURN SOME... CLEANING PRODUCTS?

HUH? YOU WANT THE KEY TO THE JANITOR'S ROOM?

#152 Something Grotesque

CHACK KA-CHACK

カニニニ RATTLE

PUH! ♪ PUH! ♪ PUH! ♪ PAIN IN THE BUUUTT~ ♪

OH, THEN WOULD YOU MIND DROPPING OFF THAT EMPTY CAN OF KERO-SENE, TOO?

OF COURSE~

SMOOSH

YEESH, SOMEONE ALWAYS HAS TO WATCH OUT FOR THAT BOY.

HIS SPARE BODY ISN'T HIDDEN AT ALL!

WOBBLE WOB

YIKES!

WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE WEAPONS?!

WAIT!!

OH, I REMEMBER THESE!! THIS IS ONE OF THOSE BOWS WE USED!!

...AND WHAT HE'S DOING...

I WONDER WHERE IN THE WORLD HE IS...

PLOOP

WRIGGLE

TUNK
コト

HERE YOU ARE.

HELP YOURSELF TO THESE.

TUNK
コト

I KNOW IT'S LATE, BUT I'M HERE TO GIVE YOU THIS BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

FUSHI-SAN CAME TO VISIT.

COME ON, MIZUHA.

YOU DON'T WANT IT?

HUH?

DO YOU WANT TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT?

OH, IT'S AN ALBUM?

I'M SORRY. SHE'S BEEN SO SELFISH LATELY.

THEN WHAT *DO* YOU WANT, MIZUHA?

WHUMP

I'M...

THERE'S NO ***REAL*** FUSHI, MIZUHA.

WHAT'S HERE NOW IS JUST THE BODY OF SOMEONE I MET IN THE PAST.

YOU ACTUALLY WANT THAT?

GOSH, THIS GIRL...

HMM?

YOU WANT FUSHI-SAN?

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

CRUNCH

YOU'RE RIGHT HERE.

YOU'RE TALKING WITH ME RIGHT NOW!

YOU'RE REAL.

DO PTOO

...

TONK

HEY, NOKKER.

YOU'RE THE ONE KEEPING MIZUHA HERE, RIGHT?

THUNK

SPLISH

THE OUTSIDE WORLD HURTS MIZUHA.

UNTIL IT BECOMES A PARADISE, HER BODY AND SOUL WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO REMAIN HERE.

BURP!

THEN IF I DIED...

...WOULD YOU CRY FOR ME?

WHAT DO YOU REALLY THINK?

IS THAT HOW YOU REALLY FEEL, MIZUHA?

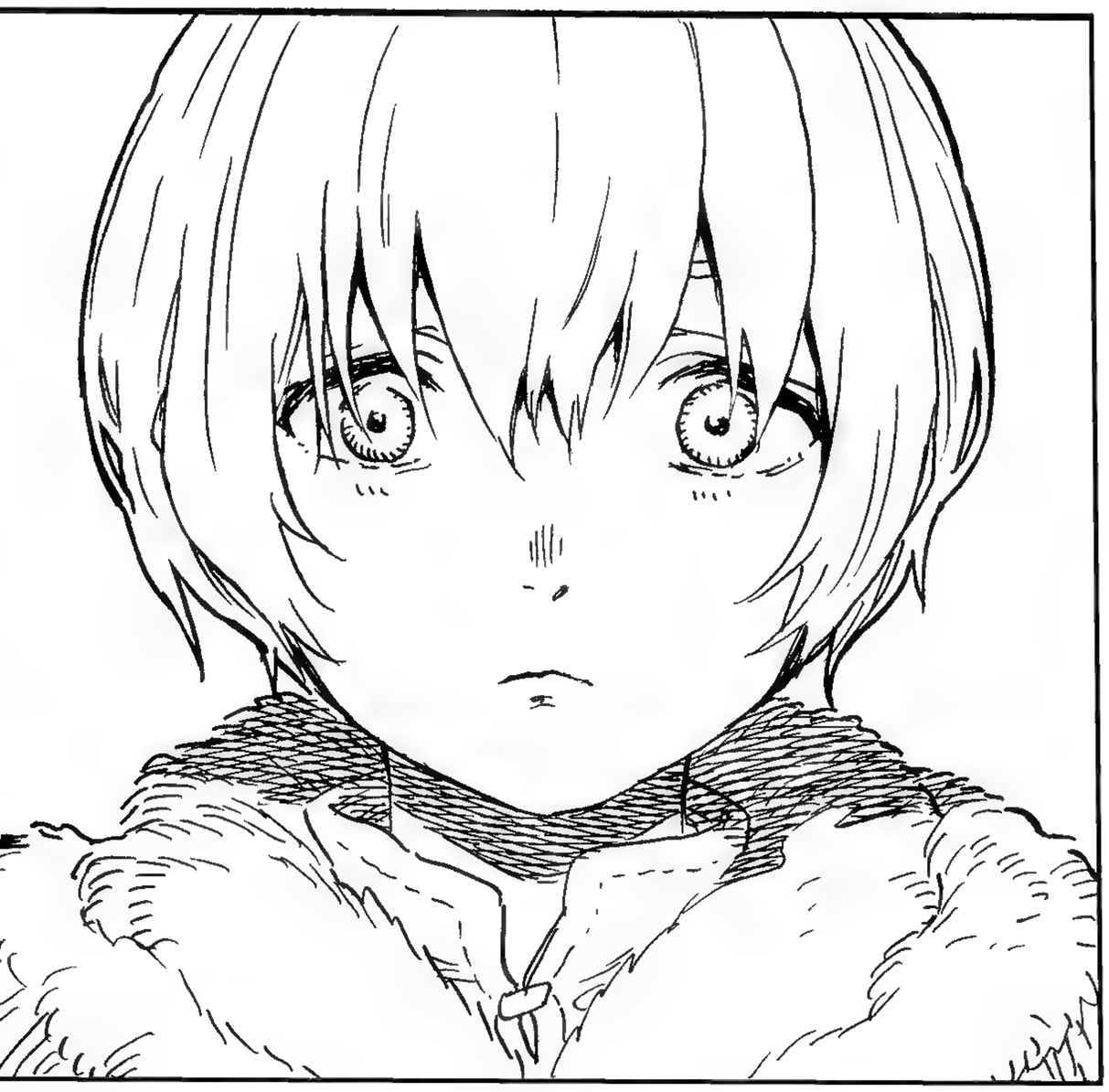
AND SO DO I.

EVERYONE WANTS YOU TO COME BACK!

ぽたぽた

YES...

...



LIAR.

YOU KNOW YOU'VE NEVER CRIED!!

BUT THAT'S NOT LIKE HUMAN CRYING.

YOU MEAN THAT TIME YOU TURNED INTO A TURTLE?

I... I HAVE SO! I'VE TOTALLY CRIED!!

NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY, IT DOESN'T RING TRUE.

I CAN'T TRUST YOU ANYWAY, FUSHI.

...

JUST LOOK. YOU'VE MADE IT SO YOU CAN ESCAPE ANYTIME YOU WANT.

SHRIP

YES...

AS MY MOTHER'S *TROPHY.*

YOU'VE BEEN MIZUHA SINCE THE DAY YOU WERE BORN...

...AND YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN ALLOWED TO *BE* MIZUHA.

MIZUHA...

I'M JEALOUS OF YOU.

YOU'RE WRONG, MIZUHA.

MAYBE IZUMI-SAN DID RAISE YOU TO BE HER PRIDE AND JOY, AND MAYBE YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT...

...BUT SHE LOVED YOU.

THAT MUCH IS TRUE.

LIAR. THAT'S JUST WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE. YOU KNOW YOU CAN'T PROVE IT.

I CAN PROVE IT.

TAKE A LOOK. I THINK THAT ALBUM PROVES...

...SHE LOVED YOU.

WHUMP

...SHE DESPERATELY WANTED TO PROTECT THEM!!

EVEN IF HER PAINFUL MEMORIES ALL REVOLVED AROUND YOU...

...BUT SHE DIDN'T WANT TO FORGET YOU.

THE NOKKER CAUSED AMNESIA IN IZUMI-SAN...

I REMEMBER THIS...

ALL OF IT...

I REMEMBER ALL OF IT...

DRIP
ぽ
DRIP 3
ぽ
3

WHY WOULD YOU SHOW ME THIS... FUSHI...?

ILLSLAM

!!

THEY WERE PAINFUL MEMORIES.

FWIP

I KNEW YOU SHOULDN'T LOOK.

NOW!

WHY DON'T WE GET STARTED?

STOP IT!

LET US GO!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU~

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU~

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TO YOU~

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR MIZUHA~

ふーふー FWOOOOOOOO

110 POP!

YAY!

CLAP 110 CLAP 4 110 4

YAY!

I KNOW IT'S RUDE TO SAY THIS...

...IN FRONT OF YOUR MOTHER AND GRAND-FATHER...

UM...

TUNK

...BUT YOU DON'T BELONG HERE, MIZUHA!!

WE WANT YOU TO COME BACK!!

YOU'RE ALL TALK.

WHAT?

WHY ARE YOU SAYING THAT...?

I KNOW YOU DON'T REALLY CARE ABOUT ME...

WHY DID YOU COME HERE?

...

WE CAME ALL THIS WAY TO SEE YOU!! DOESN'T THAT PROVE ANYTHING?!

WE ALL WORKED TOGETHER TO FIND YOU BECAUSE WE CARE ABOUT YOU!!

MIZUHA-SENPAI, ARE YOU SEEING A DOCTOR?

UM, MAY I ASK SOMETHING?

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO STAY HERE?

DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT. TELL ME.

NOT SO LOUD, HANNA. YOU'RE SO NOISY.

ROGER THAT!

YOU AREN'T A DOCTOR, SO I DON'T WANT YOUR MEDICAL ADVICE.

THEN THINK OF ME AS YOUR DOCTOR WHEN I TELL YOU...

...THAT INSUFFICIENT EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT IS UNHEALTHY. IT CAN RAISE YOUR RISK OF OSTEO-POROSIS.

NO... WHY?

I DON'T KNOW...HOW YOU WERE RAISED, MIZUHA...

...AND MAYBE...

...I CAN'T HELP...

...BUT I STILL WANT TO DO WHATEVER I CAN FOR YOU...

YOU DON'T NEED TO DO ANYTHING ANYMORE, HANNA.

I DON'T EXPECT A SINGLE THING FROM YOU.

THEN... WHAT SHOULD I—

OH, PARDON ME.

THIS PLACE SMELLS LIKE RANCID WATER.

...HUH?

WHUMP

ALL THOSE IN FAVOR?

AND THAT CAKE SEEMS LIKE IT WOULD BE AS DELECTABLE AS VOMIT. METHINKS YOU HAD BETTER LEAVE, MIZUHA-SENPAI, BEFORE YOU START TO STINK, TOO.

I THINK... WE'D BETTER NOT FOR NOW.

YOU SHOULD KICK THEM OUT!!

WOW, HOW CAN YOU BE SO RUDE?!

WHUP

WHAT WAS YOUR DREAM AGAIN?

FUSHI...

WHY NOT...?

HUH...?

...THE WORLD HAS TO BE AT PEACE BEFORE YOU CAN DO THAT.

AND...

IT'S TO MAKE EVERYONE'S DREAMS COME TRUE, RIGHT?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

...WHAT PEACE IS.

I'VE REALIZED...

DID YOU *DO* SOME-THING...?

HUH?! DID YOU JUST GET HERE, FUSHI-KUN?

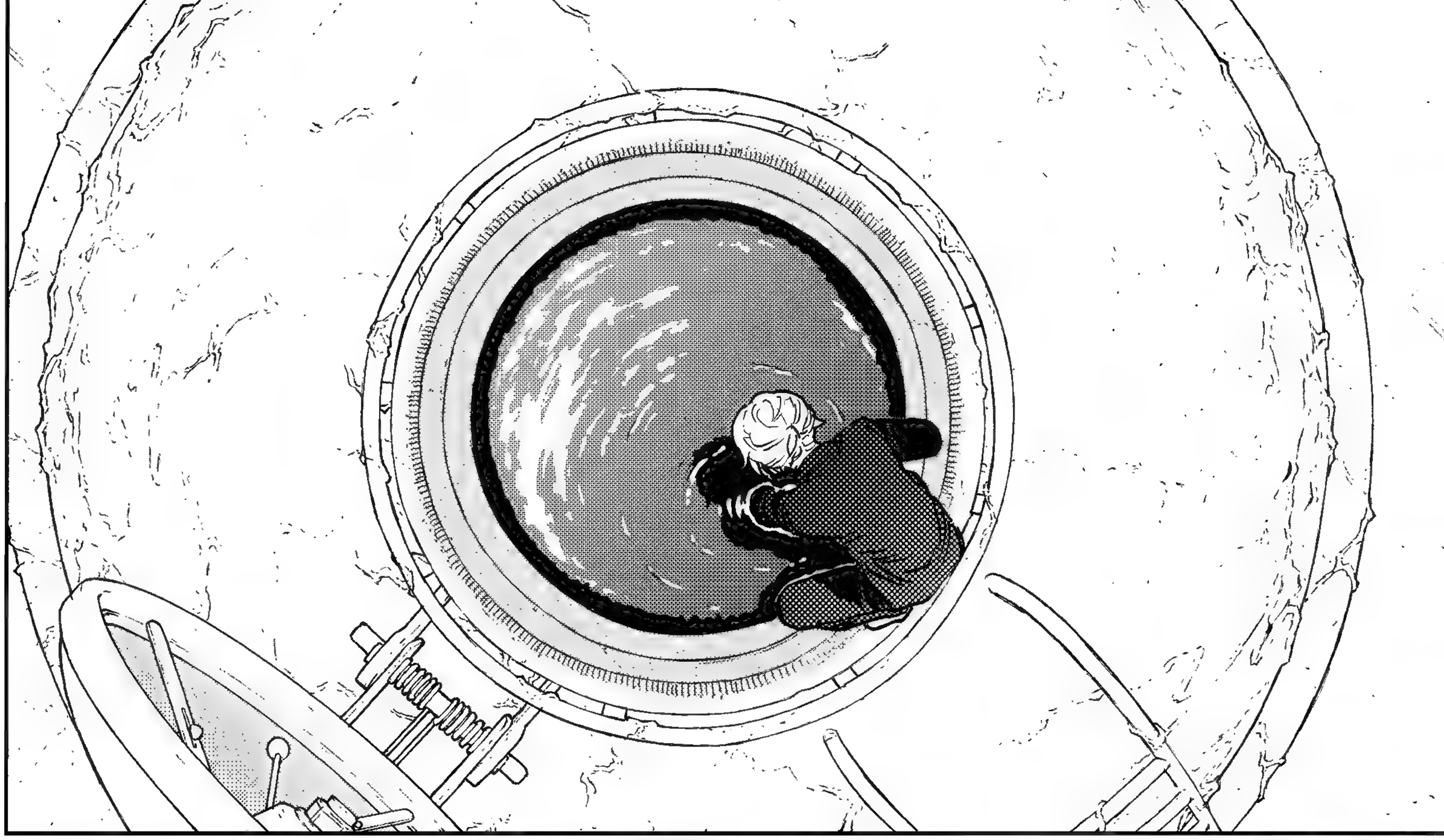
HUH?! DID YOU CHANGE YOUR HAIR BACK?

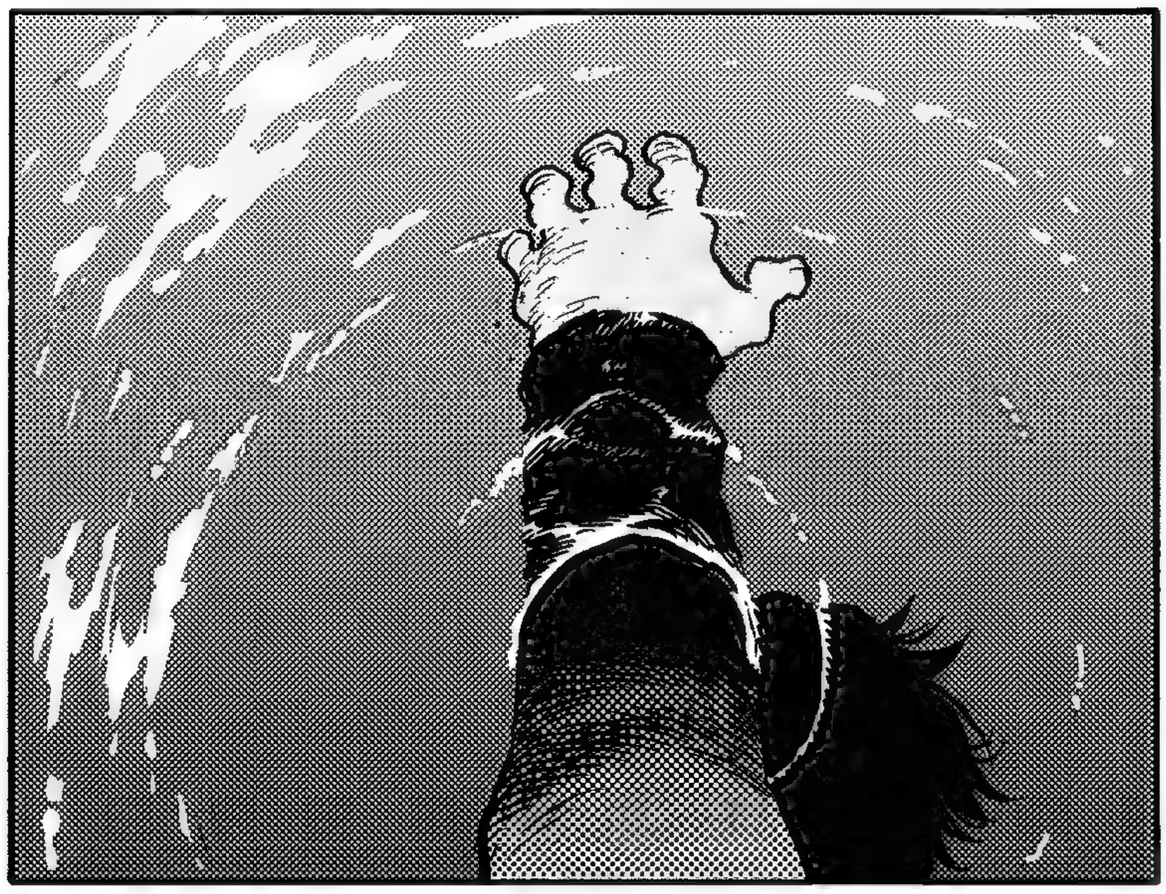
DID YOU OVERSLEEP? GOOD MORNING.

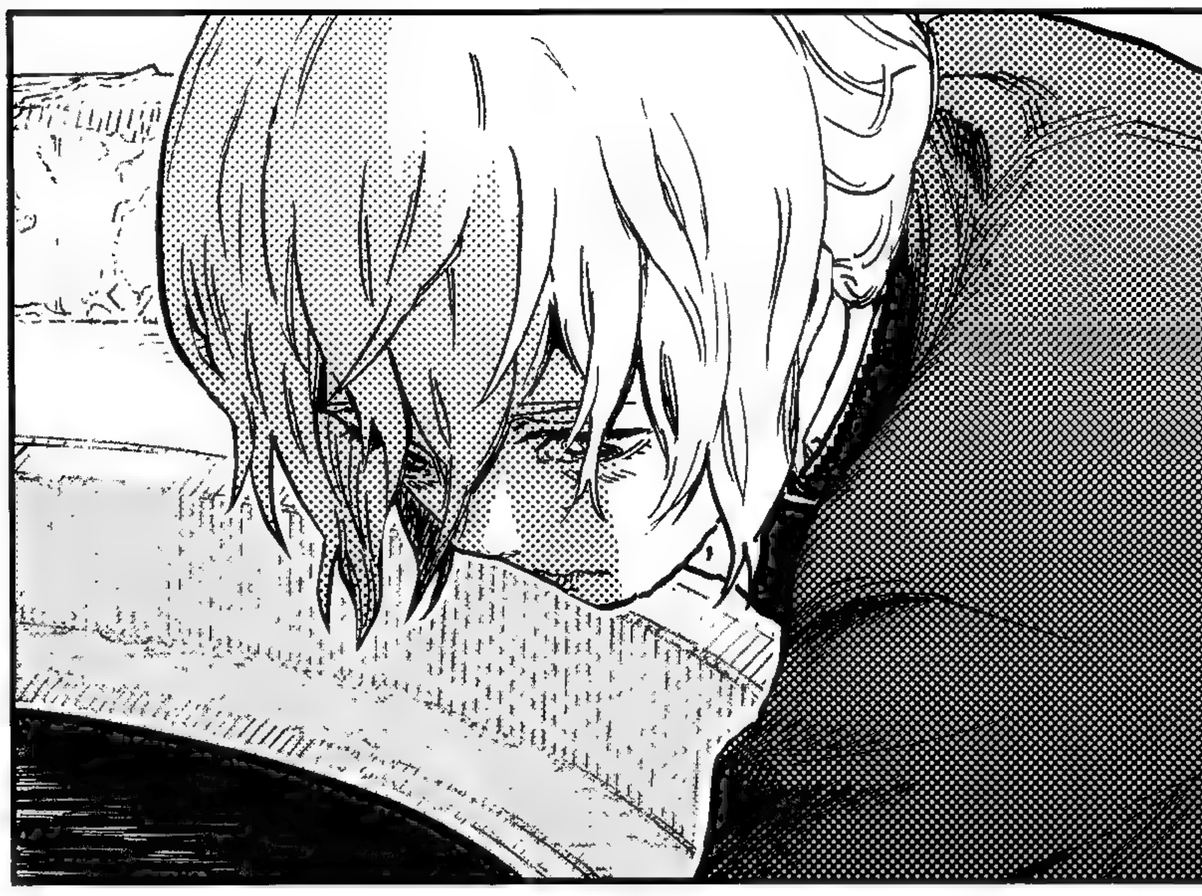
WHAT THE? HE CAME TO SCHOOL AFTER ALL...

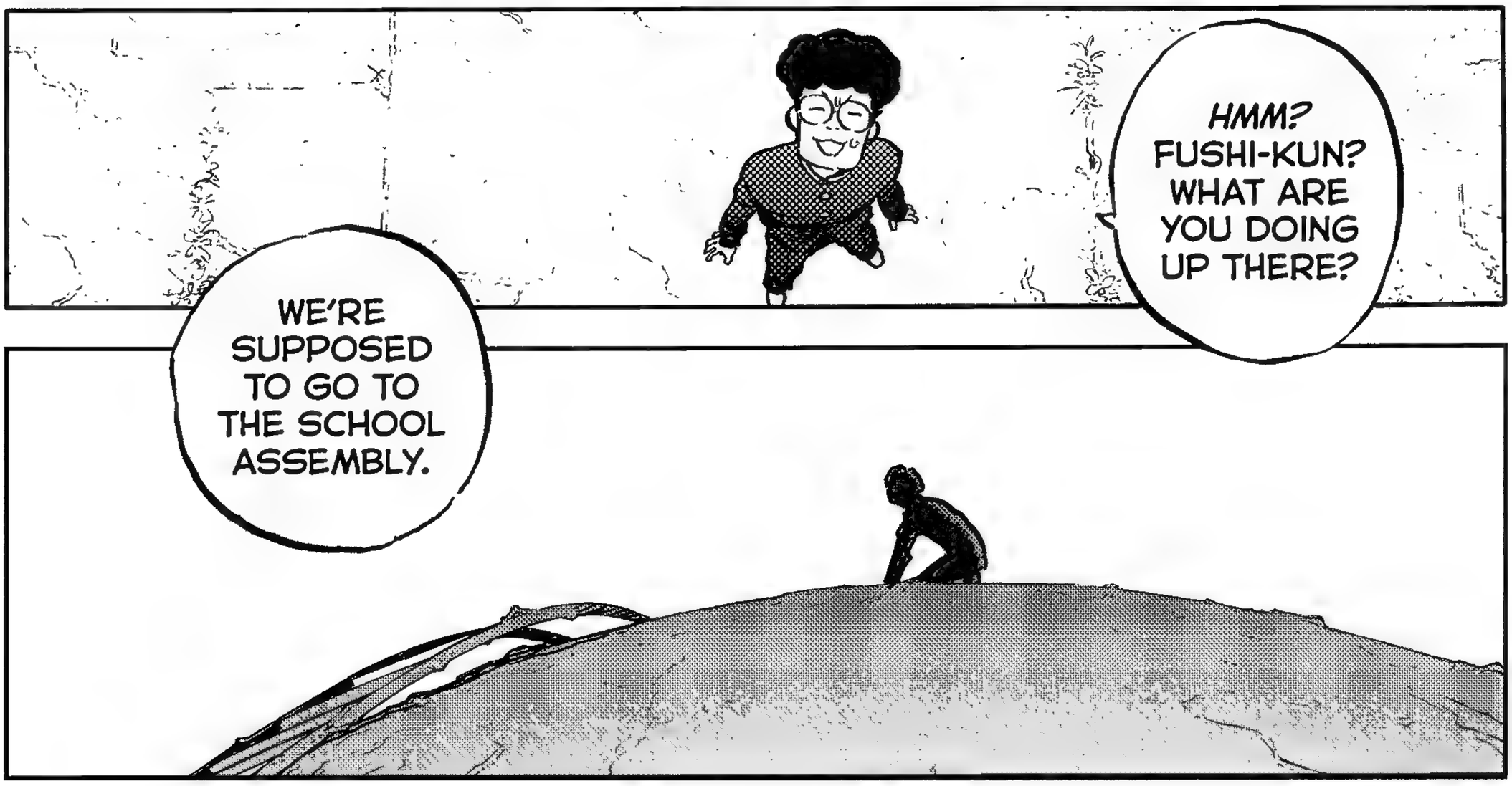


#153 Invisible Battle








HMM?
FUSHI-KUN?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING UP THERE?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO GO TO THE SCHOOL ASSEMBLY.

YOU DYED YOUR HAIR BACK?

HEY, FUSHI-KUN!

FUSHI-KUN?

...?

REALLY? HE ALWAYS ACTS WEIRD, SO HOW CAN YOU TELL?

...

DON'T YOU THINK HE'S ACTING WEIRD?

LISTEN HERE, FUSHI! I HAD A HELL OF A TIME CLEANING UP YOUR MESS!

DID YOU FINISH WHATEVER YUKI HAD YOU DOING?

OH!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, TONARI-SAN?

COME WITH ME.

SNAG

BUMP

MOVE IT.

HUH~?

GIRLS! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONES NOT INSIDE.

LET'S STOP... BEING LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME.

HEY!

WHAT? YOU GOT A PROBLEM WITH THAT?

ACK!

BLOOOSH!!!

DID THE SPRINKLERS MALFUNC-TION?!

ZSHWHH

WATER?!

ZSHPHHH

EEK!

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

SO COLD!

O-OKAY!

EVERYONE, GET OUT OF THE GYM!

GET BACK OUTSIDE, KIDS!!

TROMP TROMP TROMP TROMP TROMP

MY SHOES ARE SOAKED!

JEEZ... WHAT A MESS!

AcHOO!

SENSEI!

AHAHA! THIS IS KINDA FUN!

YOU GOT A TOWEL?

LET'S HEAD TO THE CLUB ROOM.

HUH? WHAT'RE YOU DOING, TONARI-SAN?

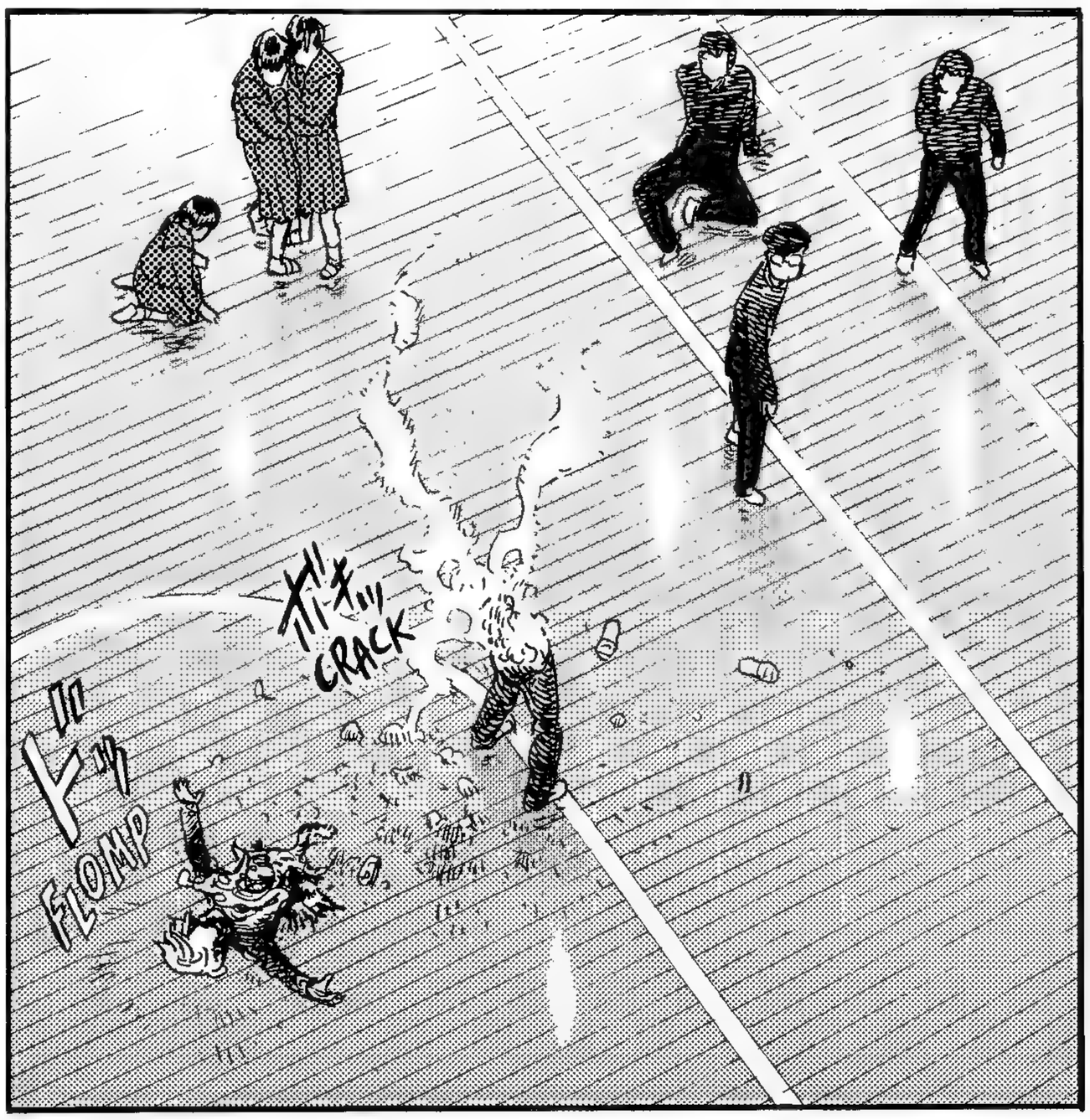
STAY ON TARGET!

BLAM!

SHRIP

HUFF!


EEEEEK


CRACK
FLOMP


TROMP TROMP TROMP TRO
FU-FUSHI-KUN?!


I'M GONNA HIT THAT THING WITH ANOTHER ONE!!
GET OUT OF THE WAY, LOSER!!
HOLD IT, TONARI-SAN!! WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING?!

THAT'S NOT HIM!!

THAT THING ISN'T FUSHI!!

RUN!! QUICKLY!!

SHLORP

SHLICH SHLICH

PLAB

GLORP

GLUMP

GLORB

FWISH

HUH?!

WHAM

TANA-
SEN!!

TANA-
CCHI?!

THUD

WHOOMP

FLOMP

WHAT'S GOING ON?!

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS HAPPENING?!

FUSHI-!!

YOU'VE ALREADY REALIZED, HAVEN'T YOU, FUSHI?

EVEN WITHOUT NOKKERS, HUMANS CAN BE PLENTY UNHAPPY.

THAT IS THE NATURE OF THOSE WITH BODIES OF FLESH.

UNLESS WE CHANGE THEIR SURROUNDINGS AS WELL, WE CANNOT CONSIDER THIS A *GOOD* WORLD.

WE NOKKERS HAVE, THUS FAR, BEEN COMPENSATING FOR THOSE BODIES' DEFICIENCIES.

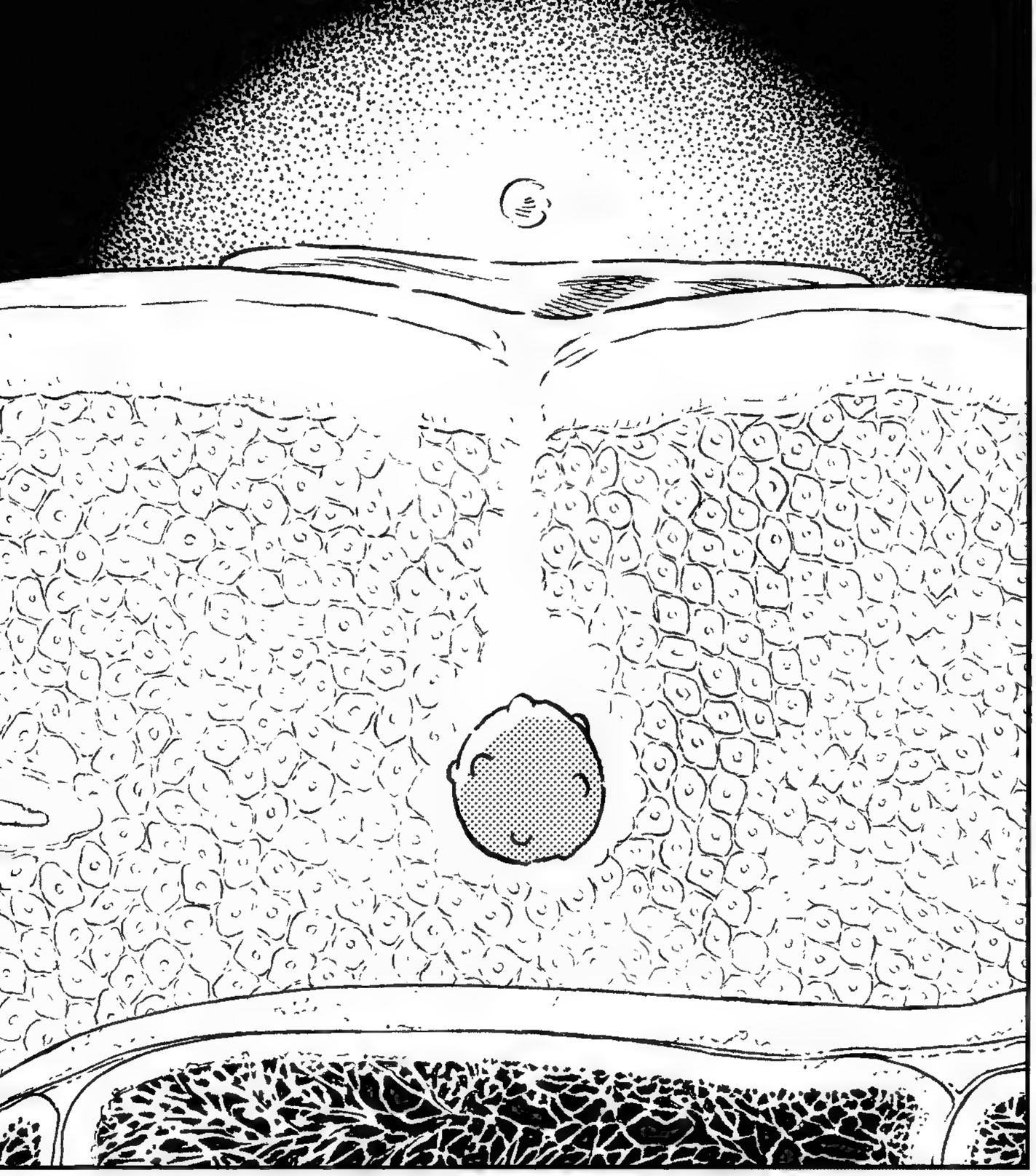
WE HAVE GRANTED OUR CHARITY TO ONLY THE UNHAPPY HUMANS. BUT NOW WE HAVE REALIZED...

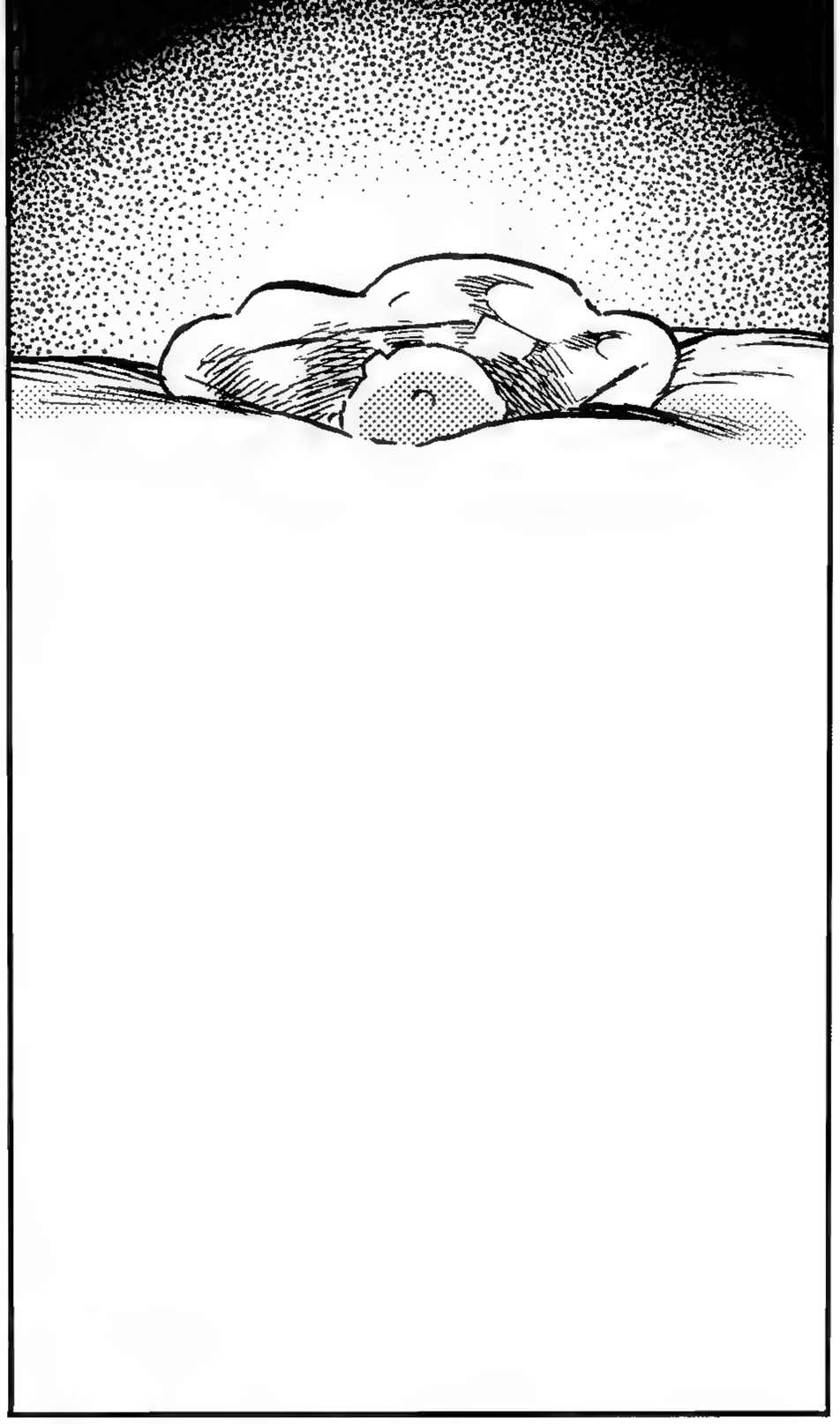
...THEIR *ENVIRONMENT* IS ALSO A PROBLEM.

WHAT DID YOU DO...?

SO WE THOUGHT WE'D TRY...

STARTING WITH THE SCHOOL.






FUSHI.


GRIN


AND...?

OH, THIS?

WHUMPH

GRRRR!!!

SHWIP

CLATTER CLATTER

RMB RMB RMB RMB RMB

EEK?!

WHOA, IT'S FULL OF NOK-KERS!!

EEP!

H-HNGH!!

SHLONK

HRN-GH~

WOW, IT SEEMS THEY TRULY *ARE* OUR ENEMIES.

SLIP

GRIN GRIN ニコニコ

WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

CLUB VICE PRESIDENT, THESE THINGS ARE SLIMY!!

THEY LOOK... LIKE CAGES...?

YIKES!! WHAT ARE THESE?!

DAMN IT... SO IF I TRY ANYTHING FUNNY, THE NOKKERS WILL KILL THEM...

EEEK!!

...!!

SHING

SNAP

3D WOOOOP 3333

UM, MAY I UPLOAD THIS PHOTO TO THE INTERNET?

TOSS

AHHH, MY SMART-PHONE!!

1101 FLASH

IS THAT... THE SCHOOL...?

!

PARDON ME, I'D LIKE TO CONNECT TO YOUR WIFI. WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME THE PASSWORD?

!!

FLING

AHHH! MY LAP-TOP!!

I DON'T BELIEVE IT...!!

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THAT?!

IT LOOKS JUST LIKE FUSHI!!

!!

OH...

TONARI-SAN?!

IT LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A FEW SURVIVORS.

H-H-HEY! WHAT DO WE DO?! THE COPS?! AN AMBU-LANCE?!

WE NEED TO CALL FOR HELP!!

...? WHAT'S THAT SMELL? IT SMELLS LIKE RANCID WATER!!

SNIFF スン

GAH!! I ALREADY TOUCHED TANA-SEN!!

OH YEAH, THE WATER!!

DON'T TOUCH THE WATER!!

N-NOTHING HAPPENED TO YOU, SO YOU'RE PROBABLY SAFE!!

I JUST REALIZED... IT WAS JUST US, RIGHT? WE'RE THE ONLY ONES THAT DIDN'T GET SOAKED...

HUH?! WHAT ABOUT YOU?!

GET GOING!!

THIS WAY, EVERY-BODY!!

YEAH, I'LL TAKE IT OUT HERE AT SCHOOL!!

YOU'RE GOING TO FIGHT IT?!

WE CAN'T LET THAT THING WREAK HAVOC IN TOWN!!

GO, LIGARD!!

I'LL ACT AS A DECOY.

MY, HOW NAUGHTY~ YOU SHOULDN'T BRING WEAPONS TO SCHOOL.

I RAISED NOKKERS INSIDE YOUR CORPSE.

ITTY, BITTY ONES!

BUT THEY HAD ONE MAJOR FLAW.

THE LITTLE ONES INSIDE AREN'T VERY MOBILE, SO THEY CAN'T MOVE QUICKLY UNLESS THEY RIDE IN SOME LIQUID.

I'M THE CAUTIOUS TYPE.

BY THE WAY, WHAT'S THAT THING THAT LOOKS LIKE ME?

I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING FUN!!

OH!!

THAT DOLL WILL KEEP MOVING UNTIL IT MAKES THE ENTIRE STUDENT BODY ITS PAWNS.

I'LL FREE ONE OF YOU.

...IT GETS ONE OF THOSE GIRLS...

SNAP

SO EVERY TIME...

NO. I *KNOW* MIZUHA WOULDN'T REALLY WANT TO DO THIS...

...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT EVERYONE WAS TO YOU...

...BUT IF YOU'RE TREATING LIFE LIGHTLY...

...MIZUHA...

ARE YOU SAYING YOU'RE GOING TO KILL EVERYONE?

HA HA HA HA!!

THE MIZUHA *I* KNOW LIKES TO EAT CREPES... SHE SMILES WHEN HER MOTHER PRAISES HER...!! *THAT'S THE REAL MIZUHA!*

DO YOU THINK I'LL LET YOU GO BECAUSE YOU'RE CRYING?

OF COURSE...

...NOT.

A QUESTION, IF I MAY?

CAN WE ASSUME WE WILL ALL BE FREED IF TONARI-SHI IS ABLE TO DEFEAT THAT FUSHI PUPPET?

EVEN IF THE OTHERS ESCAPE THE SCHOOL...

THAP

KA-
BLAM

CRACK

POP

GLUB
GLUB


THUD
I CAN'T LET THAT SPLASH ON ME!! I NEED A SEC TO PULL MYSELF TOGETHER!
SPLAT SPLATTER SPLORT
CRICKZ
CRACK
OVER HERE, MONSTER!!

I KNOW!
THE ROOF!!

ZLR

ZLR...

?!

I CAN'T GO
OUTSIDE!!

HU...HU...

TROMP

TROMP

TROMP

TROMP

TROMP

SKREE!

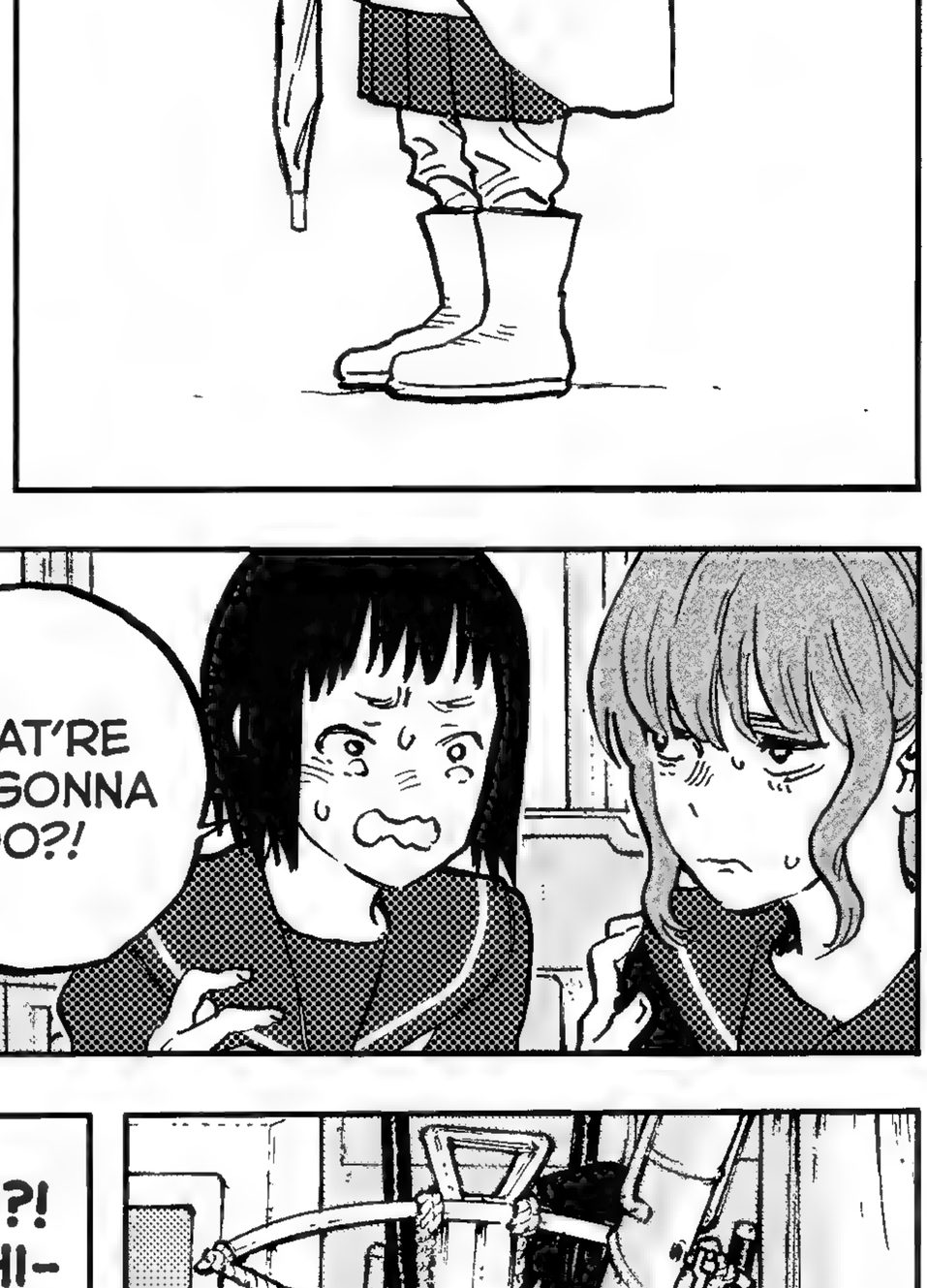
SKA-SKREE!!

SKREE!

I'M GOING TO GO TO THE FACULTY OFFICES, CALL FOR HELP, AND THEN MEET BACK UP WITH TONARI-SAN.

HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

I'LL LET YOU HANDLE THINGS ON YOUR END HOWEVER YOU LIKE.



TUNK

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

HEY, LOOK AT THIS.

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?!

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?! HELP US!

OH, JEEZ! WAKE UP, FUSHI-KUN!!

YOU THINK IT'S OKAY FOR US TO USE THESE?

HUH?! FUSHI-KUN?

AND, FOR SOME REASON, A BUNCH OF BLADES...

YOU CAN'T MEAN...

BACK WHERE?

BACK?

I'M...

...GOING BACK.

DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD STICK AROUND AND HELP?

THAT TONARI GIRL...? SHE'S FIGHTING ON HER OWN.

FRICKIN' WILD, HUH?

I'VE GOTTA TELL MY FAMILY SO WE CAN EVACUATE!!

YEAH.

W-WUH- WAIT A SECOND!! I CAN'T DO THIS! I'M GOING HOME!

LEAVE WITH US!!

WHOA, KASA-BECCHI?! WHY?!

I THINK I'LL STAY BEHIND, TOO...

URGH... TANA-SEN~

THE BEST THING FOR POWERLESS, AVERAGE PEOPLE LIKE US TO DO *IS RUN FOR IT!!* I'M DRAGGING YOU OUTTA HERE!!

THAT'S ABSURD!! YOU TWO WON'T BE ANY HELP!!

I WANT TO STAY.

NO, I'M NOT LEAVING.

I'M SO HAPPY RIGHT NOW.

SEEING ONE'S IDEALS FULLY ACTUALIZE FEELS INCREDIBLE.

HAHAHA! THE GANG'S BREAKING UP ALREADY?

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED TO ACT COOL. YOU SHOULD HAVE KEPT THROWING TANTRUMS TO GET YOUR WAY.

YOU SHOULD'VE BEEN MORE SELFISH, TOO.

BUT NOW ALL YOU'RE DOING IS WATCHING QUIETLY WHILE YOUR FRIENDS ARE SLAUGHTERED.

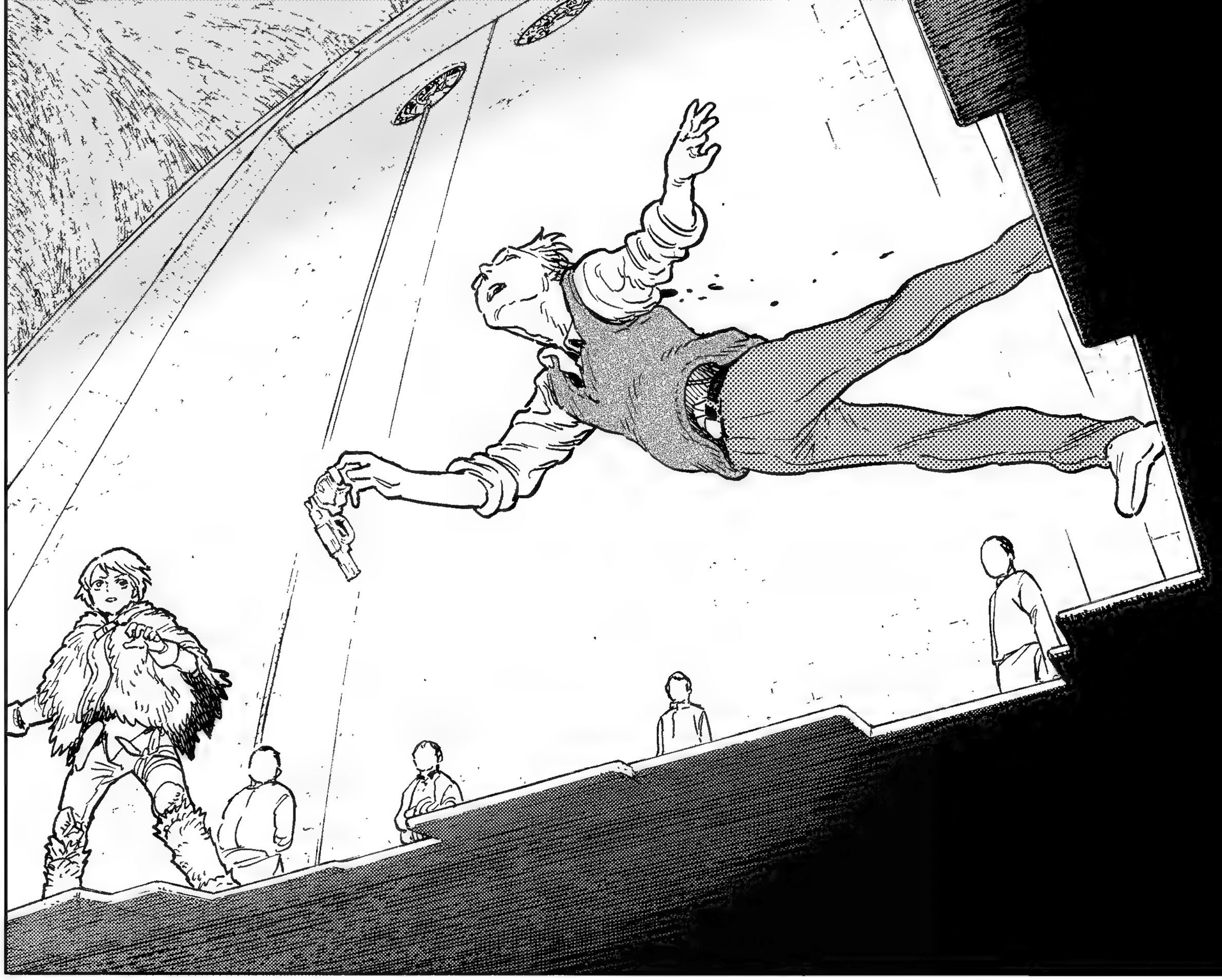
IF YOU HAD DONE THAT, YOU COULD'VE TAKEN OUT THAT FLESH PUPPET EASILY.

WHETHER THEY STAY OR GO, THE ONLY THING AWAITING THEM IS DESTRUCTION.

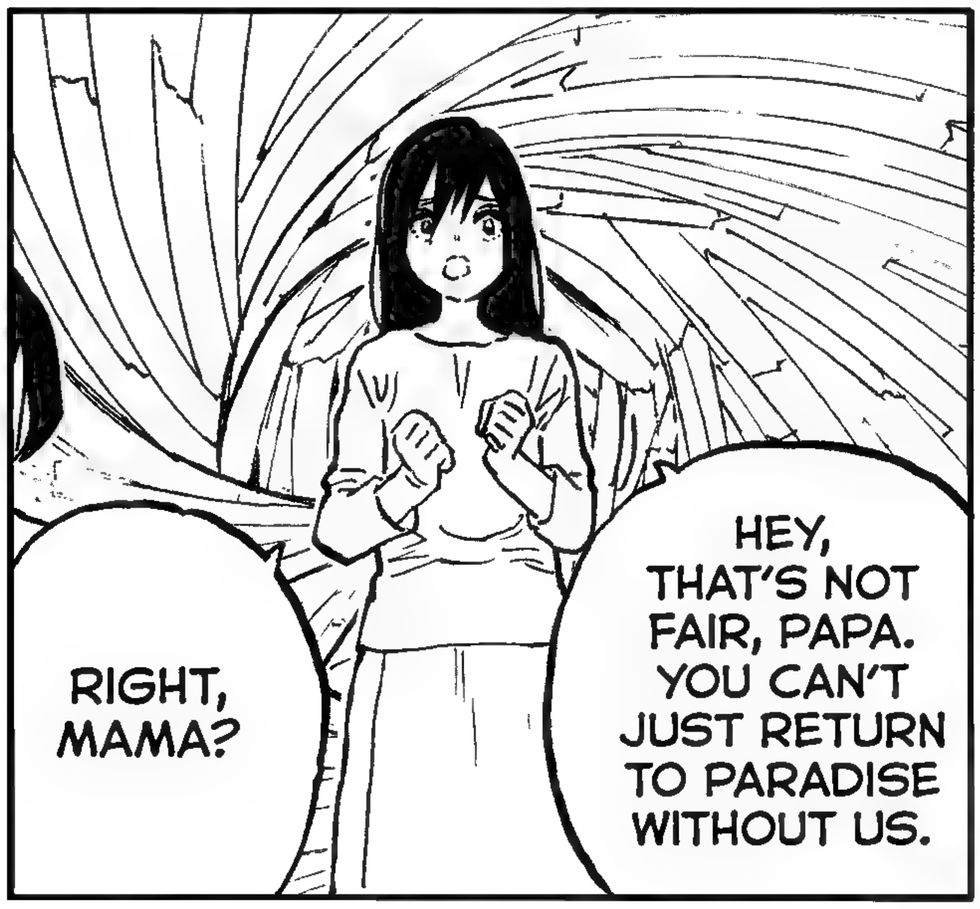
EVEN WITHOUT THE NOKKERS, THEY'LL JUST DESTROY THEMSELVES!!

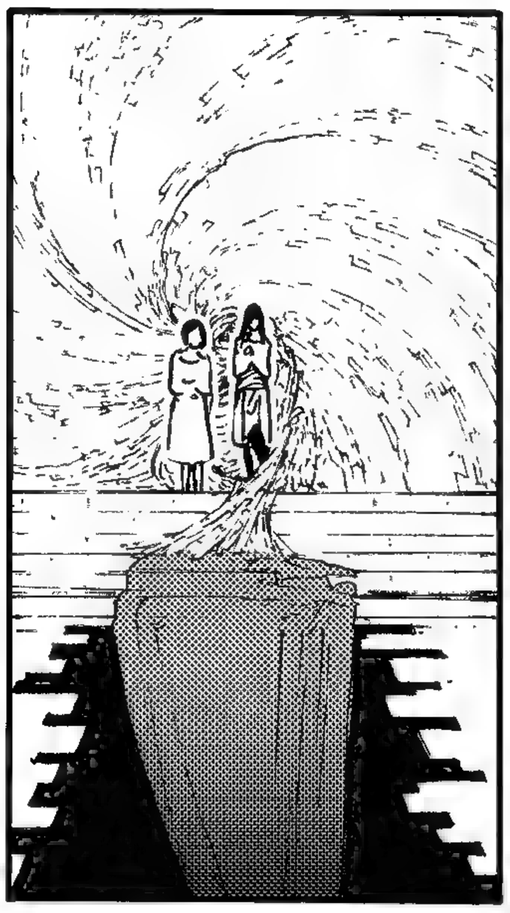
AREN'T YOU, FUSHI?

POW






RIGHT, MAMA?
HEY, THAT'S NOT FAIR, PAPA. YOU CAN'T JUST RETURN TO PARADISE WITHOUT US.





SHOOM

MAMA...?

BLAM

BLAM

RMB RMB RMB RMB RMB

?!

KA-BOOOOOM...

HONEY!!

HUH?!

HONEY! HONEY!

HEY! WH- WHAT ARE YOU DOING, MAMA?!

THIS WAY, PRESI- DENT!

OKAY!

HEAD IN THERE, EVERYONE!!

1/10 CLUNK

CRICK CRACK

I LOVE HIM!!

SHWIP

WE WON'T RUN.

COME ON.

TAKE MY HAND.

To be continued in Volume 18

TO YOUR ETERNITY

2.12.1.82.4

To Your Eternity 17

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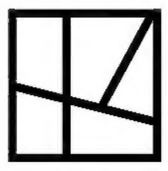
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